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September 2003

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STANTON RM-22 MIXER

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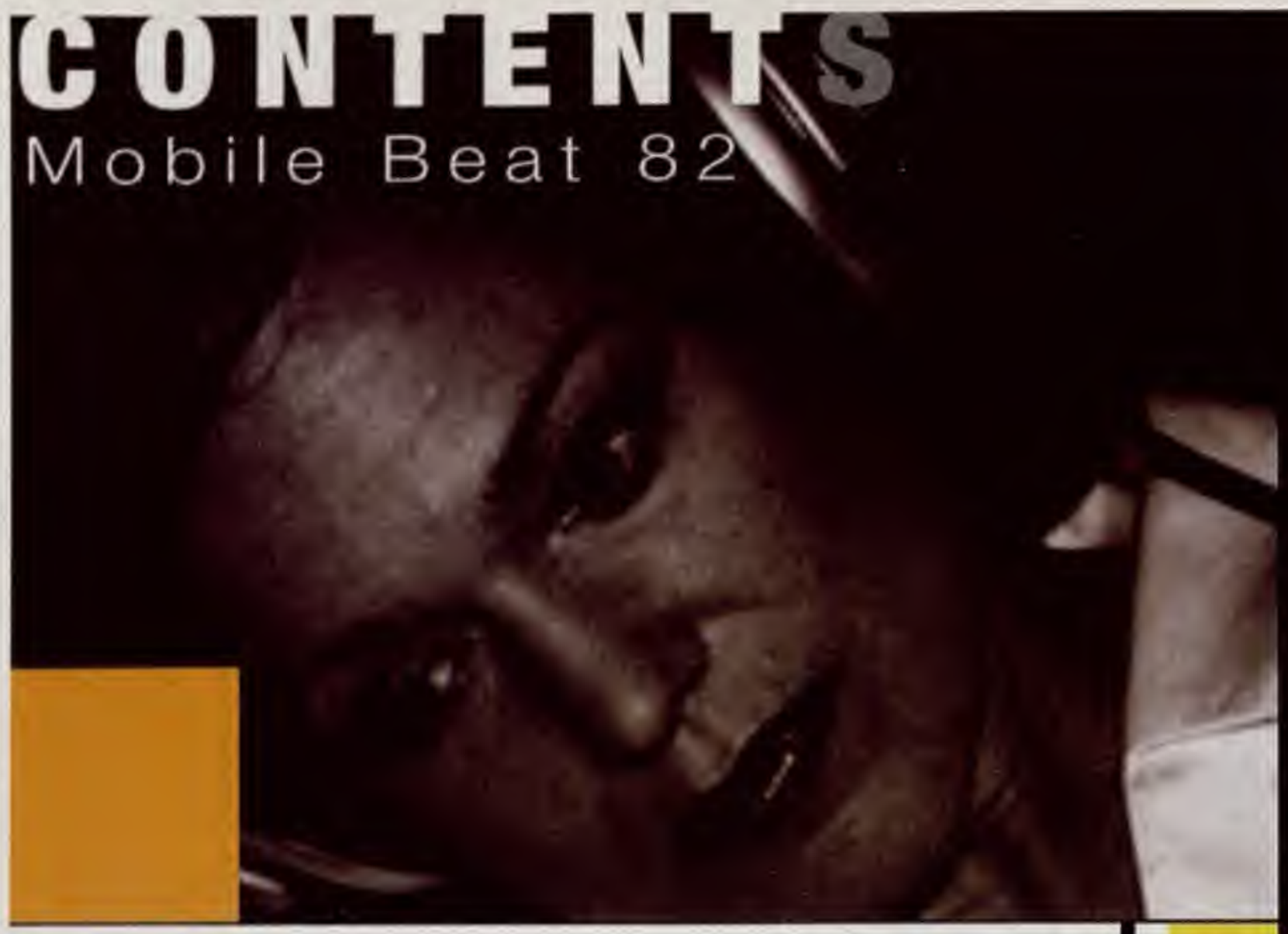

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For subscriptions, address changes or back issues, contact Mobile Beat by mail at:
P.O. Box 309, East Rochester, NY 14445.

Back issues of Mobile Beat can be purchased (subject to availability) for $5 (in Canada: $6, U.S. funds).

Shipping address:
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Penfield, NY 14526

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Mobile Beat Magazine (ISSN# 1058-0212) is published seven times per year by L.A. Communications Inc., P.O. Box 309, East Rochester, NY 14445. Ground shipments to: 1782 Penfield Road, Penfield, NY 14526. Periodical postage paid at East Rochester, N.Y. and additional mailing locations.

Subscription rates – U.S. and possessions: $23 for 1 year, $40 for 2 years and $55 for 3 years. Canada: $33 for 1 year, $50 for 2 years and $75 for 3 years. All other countries: $60 per year. Subscriptions outside the U.S. must be paid in U.S. currency.

Postmaster – Send address changes to Mobile Beat Magazine, P.O. Box 309, East Rochester, NY 14445.

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Diva DJs in the Spotlight

Believe it or not, our editorial staff debated using the term "diva" in reference to the female DJs being profiled in this issue. These days, the word can spin towards the negative when describing a particularly self-absorbed person (i.e. prima donna). However, it still carries the power of its earlier meanings: an operatic star, from the Latin for "goddess." That's obviously the spirit in which the folks at VH-1 meant it when they bestowed the title upon the queens of our recent pop music scene.

So, what better way to use the word, than to acknowledge the high level of professionalism and achievement that more and more DJ women have been attaining in recent years? Inside, a special feature article, a book review, and our DJ All Star profiles all put the spotlight squarely on the ladies.

We also take a look at a wide variety of technology that entertainers can use to reach the highest level of performance. And, of course, we provide an assortment of helpful tips and business-building ideas to fuel your fire, wherever you happen to be along your path to success. Our aim is to help you leave them begging for an encore. Bravo! Bravo!

Dan Walsh, Managing Editor

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Competitive Clarification?

Re: Guest Editorial: "Some Things Are Better Left Undone" (*Mobile Beat, *May 2003)

While most of the items under David Van Enger's list entitled "Ethical, moral, professional disc jockeys don't..." do fall under good ethical practice, some of them certainly do not qualify as ethical or moral issues.

Item 1: ...consistently, knowingly undercut any competitor just to book the event.

Response: It is not "unethical" to knowingly undercut a competitor just to book the event. That's business. Some businesses choose to compete more on price than others. I personally do not choose to compete this way, but I wouldn't call a competitor who does "unethical;" a poor businessperson, maybe—but not unethical.

Item 2: ...attempt to hire the competition's contented employees.

Response: Again, that's business. In almost any profession, employers are always keeping an eye out for talent and trying to recruit it. That sometimes means "stealing" people from competitors. Again, I personally do not do it as a standard practice, and I certainly am not happy when it happens to me, but I wouldn't go as far as to say it is an unethical practice. Just be forewarned that if you choose to operate like this, turnabout is fair play. There could be consequences.

Item 3: ...attend any type of DJ gathering (*Mobile Beat's *Las Vegas DJ show, etc.) with the sole

ON THE COVER

The last issue of *Mobile Beat* marked a change in visual focus for the magazine's covers. In an effort to capture the energy and excitement of DJing, we began including carefully selected images of professional DJs in action. With photography by Jeremy S. Lepel, the cover for July featured Awake, a member of the Skyehigh DJ collective in Rochester, New York, who spins drum & bass and beyond. Check him out at www.awake.dj and the rest of this unique group of experimental DJs at www.skyehigh.com.

Gracing this month's cover, representing the poise and success of diva DJs everywhere, is DJ Shell, a talented house/trance DJ who is helping to spearhead the rising club scene in Cleveland, Ohio. To find out more about her, go to www.djshell.com. – Ed.

Cover photo by Michael Dreeves

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intention of just absorbing information and ideas, without giving any of their valuable experiences back to others.

Response: The last time I checked, there was a fee to attend these conferences. Therefore, I am paying for those ideas. It is not "unethical" if I choose not to distribute my own. If someone were to offer these conferences at no cost, then I would agree that I have a "responsibility" to reciprocate by offering up ideas.

Although all the items in Mr. Van Enger's list would be considered good business practices, and I can respect any businessperson who abides by them, I think calling someone who doesn't "immoral" or "unethical" is incorrect, at least with respect to the three I have commented on.

– Randy Monday

David Van Enger replies:

I did not expect every one of the items listed to qualify towards all three (ethical, moral, professional). Instead I listed items I felt a DJ who was all three of these wouldn't do. Your example is excellent.

Item 1: *There are many who would consider this unethical, and to each his or her own, but I feel even more would consider this to be an unprofessional practice. Also, you seem to have missed the point of this line. If a company is priced lower than another, there is nothing wrong with that. The problem is when someone purposely lowers the price just for the specific occasion of booking that particular event—when they use lines like, "Oh, they are charging $900. Well I'll tell you what. I will lower my price to $825 so that you will book me." I don't know a moral, ethical, professional DJ who wouldn't say that these types of practices hurt the DJ industry as a whole.*

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Paul Widlund of BDJ's DJ's & Karaoke, Traverse City, Michigan offers this tip for some extra speaker safety:

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X-17

[Four-channel 19" rackmount mobile/club DJ mixer] [Balanced XLR and unbalanced RCA master outputs] [3-band EQ per channel] [Fader start on all four channels] [Eight stereo channel sources (four switchable phono/line stereo inputs and four dedicated stereo line inputs)] [Two mic inputs] [3-bank sampler with pitch control and compact flash slot to save and recall samples] [Separate stereo aux input w/ level control] [Discrete aux outputs, booth outputs and record outputs] [Booth dimmer] [Effects send/return] [Replaceable crossfader]

www.tascamdj.com

TASCAM DJ

Radio icon Wolfman Jack, a.k.a. Bob Smith, is getting his own museum, seven years after his death. Earlier this year, a group of community leaders in Del Rio, Texas, unveiled plans for the museum and a $130,000 statue of the legendary disc jockey, sculpted by Michael Maiden. "I'd listen to him late at night on my little Montgomery Ward transistor radio," recalls Maiden, who is now 52. Del Rio is where Smith invented the character of Wolfman Jack, and where he got his first big break on XERF Radio, a high-powered radio station located across the border in nearby Ciudad Acuna, Mexico. Organizers expect the statue to be ready by November, while the museum is set to open sometime in 2004. Wolfman's disc jockey studio, now housed on family property in North Carolina, will be relocated to Del Rio. To find out how you can be a part of this undertaking, go to www.wolfmanjackfoundation.com.

Joe Jack Cues Up for Vestax

Joe Giacopelli

Korg USA, exclusive U.S. distributor for **Vestax** DJ/professional audio products (www.vestax.com), has named Joe Giacopelli (a.k.a. DJ Joe Jack) as Vestax Associate Product Manager. In his new position, Giacopelli will support sales and marketing efforts for Vestax, as well as work closely with the company to develop new products and tools for DJs. He comes to Korg USA after a decade-long career as a DJ in New York's challenging and progressive music scene, performing in such

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The winner also took home a Mini Legend effect from **Chauvet Lighting**, a **Screen Works** 6' by 8' projection screen, and a VA-3 video monitor from **Promo Only**. Promo Only also provided DVD and CD subscriptions. **American DJ** contributed a sturdy LTS-50T stand

system and Dyno-Fog II fogger. Other items were slated to be added at press time. The complete list, as well as the envied winner of this Sensational DJ System Giveaway™ can be found at **www.mobilebeat.com**.

Check out these company Web sites for details on their products:

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popular venues as Limelight and the Roxy. His five years of M.I. retail experience at Sam Ash and three years at Music Palace Studios in New York help him bring a thorough understanding of current audio technologies to his role.

School Is in Session

SAE Institute has established **djschool@sae**, the newest addition to its worldwide educational audio and multimedia programs. The inaugural session, "Turntable Essence," concentrated on both fundamental and advanced DJ techniques as well as equipment, music theory, and DJ musicianship. Led by SAE alumni Jay Borland (DJ Jase) and Glenn Barretto (DJ Excess) it offered students a combination of DJ-specific classroom curriculum and instructional lectures, professional demonstrations, and interactive lab assignments. For more info on the school's growing number of DJ-specific course offerings, go to www.sae.edu.

Networking News

Rob Peters of the **National Association of Mobile Entertainers** (NAME - www.djkj.com) and Ryan Burger, President of **ProDJ.com** recently announced a new networking relationship resulting in a new member benefit for NAME members.

NAME members will now receive a discount on ProDJ.com hosting and marketing services and DJ Webmin accounts and services. "By adding the benefits of ProDJ.com and DJ Webmin to the extensive member benefits already offered by NAME," says Peters, "our members will begin to have a better, more professional web presence..." It also boosts the recognition of NAME members as a source of professional entertainment among brides or party planners who access ProDJ.com.

ProDJ.com also recently forged a new relationship with **Love2DJ/BridalLinks**, a competitor since 1996. Love2DJ.Com's search engine placements now flow through to ProDJ.com's bridal and party planner search system, thus expanding the Web presence of ProDJ.com's listed DJs. ProDJ.com will also be working with its hosting and marketing clients to get them on the BridalLinks.Com search system.

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DJ World Update

Segue Productions has announced some key events for the **2004 DJ World Tradeshow and Conference**, scheduled for September 16-19, 2004 at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel and Conference Centre, in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. Go to www.segueproductions.net for up-to-the-minute details. A major highlight of the show will be the North American DJ Association Roundup. Representatives from regional and national DJ associations all over North America will meet to discuss the changing role of associations in the 21st century. There will also be a one-day conference with panels and workshops discussing how to attract and keep members, how to develop and promote benefits and programs for members, and a lot more.

DJ Temple Gets Ultimate

In a continuing effort to place their products in world-class venues and studios throughout the world, **Ultimate Support Systems** (www.ultimatesupport.com) has donated stands to the state-of the-art Hawaiian studio, Temple Warplex, owned by **Thud Rumble Ltd.** (www.thudrumble.com). A principal owner of the studio, DMC DJ champion and hall-of-famer DJ Qbert uses the Ultimate Support IQ 3000 stand to hold his samplers and turntables during sessions. He says, "Forget building shelves—these stands are the only way to go!"

Thud Rumble Ltd. is a diversified media management company committed to showcasing and expanding the realm of the scratch DJ.

B. Rich Expo

We recently "ran into" some familiar faces at an audio event, just down the road from One Mobile Beat Tower, in Webster, New York. B. Rich Company, Inc., a regional distributor and rep firm for a variety of audio brands, hosted a manufacturers' open house. Among others, personnel from **Gemini** (www.geminidj.com) and **ETA** (www.etasys.com) were on hand. In the left-hand picture, Bill Richards (l.), owner/president of B. Rich, appears with ETA's Victor Pavona (r.); in the other shot, Richards is flanked by Alan Cabasso (l.) and Jeff Kleinberger (r.) of Gemini Sound Products.

Univenture Reloaded

Leading CD storage provider **Univenture, Inc.** has launched a new, easier to navigate, full-service Web site at www.univenture.com. At the site, you can now purchase, as well as find information on the company's media packaging and storage products. Univenture has built a loyal following for its line of sleeves, multidisc and other storage products, along with UniKeep binders and wallets. The company is also a good corporate citizen, making sure that many of their products are either of archival quality or easily recyclable.

The Right Call

Our recent review of **DJSoft's** Event Manager software (*MB* July 2003, #81, p. 28) experienced one technical difficulty—we listed the company's Web site incorrectly. For more info on this powerful DJ business management solution, go to **www.djsoftinc.com**, not www.djsoft.com, as was printed.

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American Audio's new 19-inch 4-channel **Q-FX19 Mixer** features an exclusive multi-color VFD screen (Vacuum Fluorescent Display) to monitor its functions. Eight exciting, customizable DSP effects are included (Trans, Echo, Filter, Pan, Filter, Pitch Shift, Flanger and Phase), which can be triggered with an innovative Crossfader FX mode, and also set incrementally using Wet/Dry control. A Trim Output Control button on the back of the unit sets a limit on how high the master volume can go. The mixer includes 3 phono, 4 line, 3 aux and 3 mic inputs, along with a large collection of other mixing features. The Q-FX19 can be configured as a tabletop or rackmount unit (6 spaces). MSRP: $759.95

American Audio • 4295 Charter St. • Los Angeles, CA 90058
Tel: 800-322-6337 • Fax: 323-582-2610 • www.americanaudio.us

Flexible Mics Can Roll with It

Audio2000'S patent-pending low feedback **Flexi-MicSM series microphones (APM1501, APM1502)** offer professional features for karaoke applications. Each model features a low-impedance element and extremely lightweight diaphragm, providing excellent transient response, a wide frequency range, and clear, detailed sound reproduction. Low-frequency roll-off and proprietary shockmount designs minimize handling and stand noise. Rugged dent-resistant steel mesh grilles provide extended life and durability. Flexi-MicSM series mics are tuned with specific sound characteristics to maximize vocal performance. MSRP: TBA

Audio2000'S (H & F Technologies) • 650 Flinn Ave. • Moorpark, CA 93021
Tel: 800-661-8069 / 805-523-2759 • Fax: 805-523-2021 • www.audio2000s.com

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E-Mail: sales@partsexpress.com

NEW PRODUCTS

Tuning in Audio Vision

Roadhouse Products of Beavercreek has introduced a **Stand-Alone Monitor system (S.A.M.)** that combines audio and video monitors in one sleek, sturdy package that's especially suited for karaoke performance. S.A.M. is just 36 inches tall and is available in both powered and un-powered models. Its 146-watt monitor speaker system features a Galaxy ferrofluid driver and subwoofer. S.A.M. can be set up quickly, making it perfect for mobile sing-along shows, as well as any other application requiring simultaneous video and audio monitoring.

Roadhouse Products of Beavercreek • 3490C Dayton-Xenia Rd. • Beavercreek, OH 45432
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Bright Partnership

You can link two new units from **American DJ**, the **Emerald Sync** and **Ruby Sync**, to produce a combined green and red 4.9mW laser display. Set them up in a master/slave configuration for an instant, sound-activated show using 32 different geometric patterns. Both units also produce tunnel and scanner-type effects. Each fixture measures 10.25" x 6.5" x 5.5" and weighs only 6.5 lbs. MSRPs: Emerald Sync - $1,099.95; Ruby Sync - $399.95

American DJ • 4295 Charter St. • Los Angeles, CA 90058
Tel: 800-322-6337 • Fax: 323-582-2610 • www.americandj.com

Power and Portability

The new **Gemini GX speaker range** showcases the latest trapezoidal, lightweight ABS design. The **GX-350** is a powered, 12" two-way model that provides 200W RMS and 800W of peak power. Its amp features XLR in/out, 1/4" line output, and a built-in mic mixer with an XLR mic input and an RCA line input. The **GX-300** is a non-powered version of the GX-350. Each model contains a 12" aluminum die-cast woofer and a compression driver with a 1.5" titanium diaphragm, coupled to a horn. The **GX-450** is a powered 15" unit (300W RMS, 1,000W peak power) with more inputs, and the **GX-400** is its passive counterpart. All four speakers feature handles for easy transportation, along with protective speaker bags and stand mounts. MSRPs: $279.95 - $529.95

Gemini Sound Products • 120 Clover Pl. • Edison, NJ 08837
Tel: 732-738-9003 • Fax: 732-738-9006 • www.geminidj.com

Enlightening Low Frequencies

In the previous issue's "It's Hot" section we reported on the unique **NlightN Flat Panel speaker system**, now distributed in the U.S. by **State of the Art Music.** To complement these mobile speakers, a powered subwoofer, dubbed the **Slammer**, is being made available. The low-frequency drive unit will serve to maximize the overall effectiveness of the NlightN Flat Panel sound system by filling in frequencies below 200 Hz. MSRPs: NlightN speakers - $950/pair; package with sub – price TBA

State of the Art Music, Inc. • 164-I Summer Street # 250 • Kingston, MA 02364
Tel: 508-830-0293 • Fax: 508-830-0293 • www.nlightnspeakers.com

All Shook Up

The **Fusion** effect from **Chauvet Lighting** vibrates, rotates and even shakes, projecting a high-output, high-energy, beat-activated show. It features five dichroic colors, four prism mirrors and four lenses. An optional wired vibration controller adjusts its unique shaking function. The unit weighs only 6.4 lbs., with dimensions of 14.75" x 11.43" x 19.05". It requires one EHJ 24-volt 250-watt lamp. MSRP: $169.99

Chauvet Lighting • 3000 N. 29th Ct. • Hollywood, FL 33020
Tel: 954-929-1115 / 800-762-1084 • Fax: 954-929-5560 •
www.chauvetlighting.com

Updating a Tradition

New from **Marantz Professional**, the **CDR510 CD Recorder/CD Player** provides a digital alternative to the traditional combination cassette recorder/CD player. It offers a totally independent CD recorder that features simple one-touch record operation and a fully functioning CD player with pitch control, cue-to-music and direct track access. It accepts CDs, CD-Rs, CD-RWs, un-finalized discs, and even MP3 discs. The CDR510 represents an interesting option if you are looking to add MP3 playback or CD recording capability to your setup. MSRP: $849

Marantz Professional • 1100 Maplewood Dr. • Itasca, IL 60143
Tel: 630-741-0330 • Fax: 630-741-0652 •
www.marantzpro.com

The Beast Spreads Flowers

The **Gatorhead (LI-502)** is a new moving head/moonflower luminaire from **Odyssey Innovative Designs**. This multi-color unit is programmable via DMX and can also be sound-activated. It has 10 lenses that multiply the dual-bulb light source into 20 beams that crisscross, creating a wide, room-filling beam spread. It lives on 120-volt, 150-watt lamps. The Gatorhead measures 14" x 12" x 12" and weighs 18 lbs. Careful—this beast can eat up your dance floor. MSRP: $359.99

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Room in the Rack for Sparkling Sound

Stanton's RM-22 boasts immaculate sound, along with plenty of mixing muscle

By Jammin' Jim Kerins

As I write this, I'm in the middle of high party season, with weddings, club dates, backyard barbecues, and many other events demanding my mixing expertise. If you gig like me, when you're running from one event too another, the last thing you want to worry about is your gear. Personally, I always fill my minivan with reliable equipment and also some backup gear. Fortunately, because of my main system equipment choices, I have rarely ever had to break out the backups.

Certainly, the most used and potentially abused member of any DJ setup is the mixer. Speaking of abuse—the crew down at One Mobile Beat Tower made the potentially disastrous choice of sending me the brand new RM-22 DJ Mixer from Stanton Magnetics. Yes, the Internet rumors are true: I have, more than once, turned perfectly good high-tech electronics into smoking boxes of melted slag. But Stanton has been making DJ mixers for years. (For the uninitiated, Stanton has been producing quality audio products since 1946. Honda didn't even start selling us cars until the '70s.) Let's see if their latest offering is up to the famous Jammin' Jim rockin' road test.

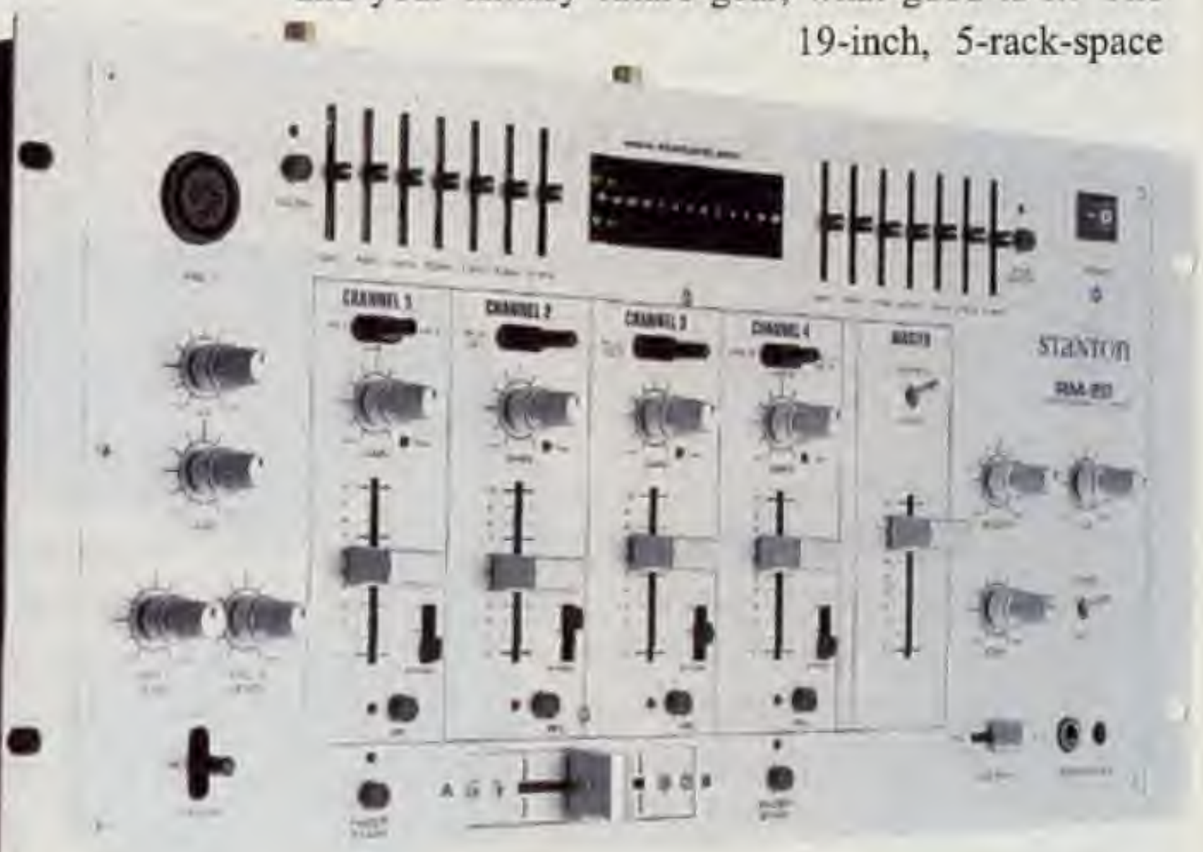
Can Good Sound Be Affordable?

The RM-22 has a list price of $299, which is not a lot if you're expecting a feature-rich mixer with great audio specs. Is it possible that such a cost-effective piece of gear could have truly professional-quality sound? We'll see.

What often happens with "affordable" mixers, is that they come loaded with options, only to fail in critical listening and performance tests. Since the DJ profession is all about music reproduction, it's important to remember that your rig is only as good as your weakest electronic link.

Air, Cruise, Tilt and Peak Lights

When it comes to a mixer, if you can't hook up all your latest toys and your fantasy future gear, what good is it? The 19-inch, 5-rack-space



RM-22 is loaded up with all the amenities. You'll have to borrow your friend's gear to fill up all four channels, which offer fully assignable inputs, including three phono, nine line, and three mic inputs, (1 XLR). Thankfully, the RM-22 doesn't make you play the "gain guessing" game, as gain levels are easy to match with convenient LED clip indicators on every channel. Fader start is available for all you lazy DJs.

Clubbers will appreciate the separate zone and booth outputs. The master fader incorporates a stereo/mono switch, which is routed to an authentic balanced (balanced good, unbalanced bad) output jack. Hooray! Other notable niceties include a stereo seven-band equalizer, a zone meter switch, and a headphone output with not one, but two

different connectors (1/4" and 1/8"). Raise your hand if you've ever tried to run someone else's system, only to find out that the stupid mixer has the wrong headphone jack. Again, it's the little things that count.

Fit, Feel, and Finish

My new Jetta is silver, my new Sony computer monitor is silver, and yes, the industrial design team at Stanton, bowing to the popular palette, has made my new mixer...well...silver. Actually, it's a really, really nice shade of silver. Thankfully, the days of goofy graphics on electronics are behind us, and Stanton takes a no-nonsense approach to layout design. The unit has a clean uncluttered look, with easy-to-read graphics. The tactile experience is enhanced by oh-so-smooth, chunky, retro knobs and faders. The well-labeled jack panel sparkles with gold-plated connectors. The main output even has a trim knob, which facilitates exact level matching with your personal equipment. Sure, trendy colors, and hip controls are nice, but the million-dollar question is "will my audio signals shine?"

RM-22 DJ Mixer - MSRP: $299

Stanton Magnetics • 3000 SW 42nd St. • Hollywood, FL 33312 Tel: 954-689-8833 • Fax: 954-689-8460 • www.stantondj.com.

Audio Specs
Freq. response: 20Hz-20kHz +1dB
THD+N (line): > 0.005% at 1kHz
S/N ratio (ref: max level): > 109 dB (main signal path)
Noise: -98 dBV (line input to any output)
Crosstalk: > -90 dB
Fader kill: > -90 dB

Tone Zone

After the initial confidence-inspiring bench test, I decided to go for it. I threw the mixer in my rack, and brought it to the big, we-don't-check-ID, super-secret, but-anyone- who's-anyone-is-there rave. This event

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A Sound Explanation

Stanton drew on the talents of a team of engineers with broadcast/recording studio mixer design experience to create the low-noise circuitry found in the RM-22, as well as a number of other Stanton mixers. SST, or Superior Sound Technology™ can also be found in the SA-5, SMX-401, SMX-301 models. The goal of the team was to achieve the clean, transparent sound and minimal channel bleed found in studio mixers, while also maintaining a minimal price point. Each SST mixer is checked against audio precision standards and given a listening test. A signed certificate of performance is included in each box.

saw the RM-22 connected to a 15,000-watt concert sound system. I don't recommend this sort of uninhibited gear testing for the faint of heart.

Because the sound system was so awesome, I knew it would mercilessly identify any inferior sound components. Shhh...first came the quiet test. With the sound system cranked up—but no music playing—the mixer demonstrated a pleasingly low signal-to-noise ratio. For those who still remember cassettes, this means no annoying hiss. I cranked up the mix and was pleased to hear a great, uncolored sound. The smooth crossfader feel was complemented by similar linear fader audio performance.

The main mic preamp sounded good too, and had lots of output. This board put out a lot of clean signal. The EQ also worked as advertised, with very little noise. Aha...2AM: time for the bouncing ravers and ravettes to arrive. What's with all those glowsticks? (I thought we were supposed to bring glue sticks.) But seriously, I slammed the faders (as well as the woofers) all night without the RM-22 missing a beat, although that's more than I can say for my personal performance. This board is easy to get comfortable with.

Final Ramblings

The Stanton RM-22 proved to be a great-sounding mixer, with lots of features packed into an easy-to-use package. If you're looking for an affordable board that doesn't sound like audio cheese, then I suggest giving the RM-22 a critical listening test and mixing workout. •

Send your questions, comments or your favorite margarita recipe to Jammin' Jim at jkerins@rochester.rr.com.

Sign, Sign, Everywhere a Sign...

And now for an important message, brought to you by Micro Marquee

By DJ Dr. Drax

Have you ever been working at a club or large event and wished you had a name badge that guests could see in the dim or nearly dark room? Well, your wait is over. Fulfilling your wish is a brand new product called the LED Micro Marquee from Enlighten Designs. It is a small, lightweight, yet very bright scrolling marquee. That's right, just like the bigger ones that you see in display centers—but small enough to add to your wardrobe.

Preparing the Billboard

In the accompanying photo, you'll notice my company name below the vivid scrolling section. This was added with a simple stick-on label. A Microsoft Word document comes with the unit to make printing labels easy.

How do you make your words mobile with this talented nametag? First, a simple program provided with the unit lets you program a custom message of up to 118 characters. Then a supplied IR (infrared) transmitter that attaches to your PC's serial port transmits the message to the badge, much like sending info via IR to a Palm Pilot or other PDA. After entering your message with the software's user interface, simply press "send" and voilá, that message now appears scrolling on the badge. It takes all of about ten seconds to create a message and program the badge with it.

On Display

The lightweight Micro Marquee is held on your shirt or jacket by super magnets that stay put without leaving residual marks. This makes an excellent way to attach it without the typical pins that perforate your clothing. For me this is a great thing, as I hate making holes in a $1000 suit.

The message will scroll continuously until the unit is turned off. You turn your scrolling message on and off by inserting or removing a coin cell battery (PCB) on the rear of the unit. While in this model the

STARCOM ENTERTAINMENT

PCB is exposed, in future production units the back will be encapsulated, except for the battery clip and RX port.

A Developing Story

This unit is very new—I actually received one of the early prototypes. Several new features are being implemented, such as scroll controlling, which will allow you to determine how your message is displayed. In future, the unit will also be IrDA (a growing infrared transmission standard) and USB compatible. Among other possibilities, this will allow you to program the marquee from PDAs and other compatible devices.

I found the newness of the product to be its only shortcoming. Besides the features that are already planned, there are other potentially useful functions that would make the Micro Marquee a real must-have product for DJs. I would like to see it support up to three lines of text, using smaller LEDs, so that you could have it display your name and company name along with your message all at one time on the moving, lighted section. Building on that, other interesting features might include varied display animation styles to bring the text to life, such as swirling, dropping, etc. This would give the badge more flash. Obviously, this kind of visual activity isn't possible with a single-line display, but as multi-line displays are developed, these will become more important.

Size of Micro Marquee in relation to a penny

Enlighten Designs / Ondraka Music Works
Tel: 440-967-0280
www.lednametags.com
info@lednametags.com

The Future's So Bright...

I felt honored to see this new product in its pre-release form. I can envision it catching on for venue staff, for added excitement at large parties, and for other festive applications. It is a natural item to be included in mitzvah shows. You could have several and give them out to the guest of honor and others. At this time, I do not see it being worn at upscale weddings, but that is only because it currently scrolls continuously. When the badge supports a multi-line display with no motion, it will increase its usefulness for more formal events.

The LED Micro Marquee is a novel and affordable item (under $80) that I think is just coming into its own. I am glad to have one in my arsenal of unique party tools. •

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At last someone has unlocked the secret of making an enormous amount of money as a DJ…

"Amazing Free Report & CD Reveal How You Can Make $100,000+ As A Mobile Entertainer..."

By Richard Lowe

Alpharetta, GA- If you want to make some real money as a DJ, this is the most important letter you will read all year. Here's why...

Marketing guru Dave Dee has just released a new, confidential report & CD called, "7 Insider Secrets To Earning $100,000+ As A Mobile Entertainer" and, for a limited time, you can get a copy of this report and CD for **free.**

I'll explain how you can get your free copy in a minute, but first...

Here Is What You'll Discover In This Astonishing New Report...

- **How a tiny ad generated 40 calls in one day** for one very happy DJ!

- **How to get the respect and prestige that you deserve.** (Never again feel like or be treated like "Just the DJ in the corner"… Be treated like a star!)

- How to KEEP YOUR PHONE ringing with people begging you to entertain at their wedding (**Be the most respected, in demand wedding professional in your market**.)

- The amazing **"Lazy DJ's Shortcut"** for creating killer marketing materials. **(Discover how to instantly create marketing materials with almost no effort!)**

- **How to instantly ask for and get more money! (Raise your price and finally get paid a LOT more than what is spent on the hors d'oeuvres.)**

- **The 7 instantly-effective steps to getting a stampede of gigs.** (You will never again have to worry about where your next gig is coming from.)

- **The ultimate no B.S., step-by-step profit generating system** that makes your success easy. (Make bucket-loads of cash so you can keep up with the latest technology.)

- **How to put your mobile entertainment business on autopilot so you can sit back and relax.** (You might feel a little guilty about all the money you make with so little work!)

- **How to book more gigs in a month than most DJ's book all year!** (Have a regular 9 to 5 job? Learn this secret and jumpstart your full-time mobile entertainer career!)

- The top secret marketing idea you can immediately use to **DOUBLE your income** without doubling the amount of gigs you do. (Not only will you rake in more money, you'll also get a LOT more RESPECT and be treated like a true professional.)

- **How YOU can be THE DJ who is making thousands of dollars each month**, doing a ton of gigs, having fun - while your competitors are sitting around complaining about the lack of work.

- **How to CRUSH the cheesy guy who runs out, buys some equipment, and claims to be a professional.** (Send him and his lowball prices packing once and for all!)

That's just a small sample of what you'll find in this report and CD. It gives you the exact roadmap you need to start your own ridiculously successful mobile entertainment business. This report is written in plain English, is easy to read, and is absolutely free.

A Shocking Revelation…

In this killer report & CD, Dave Dee reveals some unbelievably powerful secrets for making an executive level income as a mobile entertainer.

You'll be shocked at the power these unusual, yet proven methods have at transforming struggling or 'average' DJ businesses to meteoric growth and extraordinary success at blinding speed.

And here is what's amazing....

These brilliant marketing strategies and techniques are from a guy who is not even a DJ! Yes, you read that correctly. Dave Dee is actually the #1 marketing expert for *magicians* in the entire world! As a matter of fact he has 1271 entertainers from every corner of the world including Malaysia, England, Singapore, Finland, Canada, Israel, Germany, and the United States, as clients.

You see, some of Dave's clients, in addition to being magicians, are also mobile entertainers. When they discovered Dave's ingenious tactics, they all said the same thing… "Wow! These secrets are directly applicable for DJ's" and urged him to create a special program specifically for mobile entertainers. He agreed and it ROCKS.

Because you have probably never heard of Dave Dee or may be a bit skeptical, I convinced him to let you preview his methods by sending you his stunning report & CD– absolutely free with no obligation whatsoever. But you need to act now. He has the right to withdraw this offer at any time.

How To Get Your Free Report & Free CD...

To get a free copy of the confidential report & CD, "7 Insider Secrets To Earning $100,000+ As A Mobile Entertainer", call toll free, **1-888-431-9920**, 24 hours for a free-recorded message. Leave your name and address and your report will be rushed to you by first class mail immediately. Call now. **1-888-431-9920**
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Have you been moving into computer-based DJing (or karaoke, or video, or lighting control), but still searching for a way to protect the new technology from the rigors of the road? You'll want to take a look at the integrated solutions offered by **Colorado Sound 'N' Light**. CSNL has taken a few of their rock-solid, custom-designed cases and packed them with various combinations of gear to facilitate a smooth digital mixing experience. They'll supply everything you need to create a streamlined **software/hardware combination**, including a music-ready laptop. Check out CSNL on the web for the options, or contact them to custom-build a setup for you. **www.csnl.com**

Exercising Control

Interface the new **DAC-2** from **Visiosonic** with an external mixer, and there's no need to use your keyboard and mouse when spinning MP3s on the dance floor. The lightweight (7 lbs.) rack-mountable controller

looks and feels just like a dual CD player, and controls all the features and functions found in PCDJ Blue, PCDJ Red, and the new PCDJ FX software. Match beats, create and play perfectly synced loops in forward or reverse, set cue points, and much more with the touch of a button—all on the fly. The DAC-2 works with Windows 98/ME/2000/XP and comes with a plug-and-play USB interface. MSRP: $475 **- www.pcdj.com**

Segueing to New Version

Fidelity Media, Inc. has updated **MegaSeg**, their music mixing software for Macs, to version 2.6.3. It can now read the annotation tags of AAC compressed audio files used by Apple's new iTunes Music Store. The application has the unique ability to assign multiple categories to a song, and to view multiple categories at once using Boolean options. Flexible output modes allow MegaSeg to be used without a hardware mixer for a compact setup, or with a mixer for added beat-mixing options. Automated music scheduling lets you create custom music and video performances. Check out the MegaSeg site for other new features and system requirements. MSRP: $169 **- www.megaseg.com**

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DN-D4000

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Power Plus Simplicity Equals Cool

By Dan Walsh

It always amazes me when a company is able to combine ease of use and powerful features together in one software application. And if it comes with a price that doesn't bust the budget, that's even more of an accomplishment. Cool Edit Pro 2.1, from Syntrillium Software is just such a program. It leaves you wondering how they did it.

Power

The latest incarnation of this music editing and multitrack recording program adds some interesting new capabilities to an already solid product. A multichannel encoder lets you easily create a surround sound mix of your material. Support for Microsoft WMA 9 has been added, enabling you to work with this new, high-resolution audio technology.

Of special interest to remixers among the fresh features, is an improvement in the accuracy of Cool Edit's automatic beat detection. Cool Edit Pro has been a primary tool for DJs to edit samples and loops for years now. The new version features better Edit, Auto Cue, Find Beats and Mark functions, making it easier to add beat markers to files. Now you can easily stretch loops far beyond the normal BPM changes without generating artifacts. This is made possible by a hybrid stretch method, which uses time-scale stretching when reducing the BPM and beat splicing when increasing it.

Simplicity

So now you have an idea about the power of Cool Edit Pro 2.1. What about that ease-of-use I mentioned? Well, I was excited to fire up my review copy of the program, after having not seen it in action for a few years. With all the upgraded features, I was wondering if it would now be as cluttered and frustrating as some of the high-powered digital audio workstations (DAWs—programs that combine editing, recording, software synthesizers, etc. into one big package) that I'd worked with recently.

It was not. Within ten minutes, I was able to make the journey from installation to song creation. Cool Edit introduced itself to my computer's audio configuration without a hitch. I opened it and encountered a familiar, easy-to-understand multitrack view. It still had the convenient button I'd used previously in the upper left of the screen to toggle to the single track editing view. I easily previewed and then imported some slammin' loops from the Loopology Funk & Rock CD* that Syntrillium had graciously provided along with the software. After another few minutes, I had a complete song assembled.

Cool Start

An earlier Cool Edit Pro helped introduce me (and many other would-be home studio producers on tight budgets) to the wonders of computer-based music creation. Version 2.1 continues the legacy and improves on a good thing, while still keeping the cost down.

$249 - www.cooledit.com, www.syntrillium.com

Minimum system requirements:

Windows 98, ME, 2000, XP • 233 MHz processor • 64 MB RAM • 55 MB free hard disk space • 800x600 resolution • stereo sound card • CD-ROM drive

*Syntrillium's Loopology Loop CD sets contain thousands of loops in their own CEL format (Cool Edit Loop), as well as WAV versions, all optimized for use in Cool Edit software.

Ride a Traktor, Jump in the Pool, Clean Up

Synth.Biz is making available a free, downloadable guide and software that turns the low-cost **Mixman DM² USB** controller (www.mixman.com) into a powerful control surface for **Native Instruments' Traktor DJ Studio 2** (www.nativeinstruments.de). DM2MIDI, a shareware application for Windows, turns the Mixman DM² (Digital Music Mixer) into a MIDI controller for any hardware or software device that accepts MIDI input. Synth.Biz has packaged the DM2MIDI software along with specially developed configuration files. Go to www.synth.biz/dm2 for the download.

The Record Pool (www.therecordpool.com) is a place where over 120 record labels make brand new tracks available (in encrypted MP3 format) to DJs, by way of an online song promotion and rating service. The labels, independents from around the world specializing in hip-hop and various dance genres, use the Pool to showcase new artists and push new releases to the Pool's international base of subscribing radio and club DJs. Recent releases that the DJs go to hear first included Mary J. Blige's "Hook" (featuring P. Diddy), "Girlfriend" by B2K, and "No Gangsta" by Blaque (featuring Missy).

MAGIX Software has introduced **Audio Cleaning Lab 2004**, a newly upgraded tool for cleaning, restoring, and burning vinyl, cassette, CD or MP3 music to CDs. It can quickly remove hissing, crackling and scratches from old recordings. The program is fully automatic, with a Cleaning Wizard for removing noise; a Sound Optimizing Wizard for correcting volume fluctuation, enhancing the sound and adding effects; a Track Creation Wizard for partitioning each track; and a Burn Wizard for CD mastering and burning.

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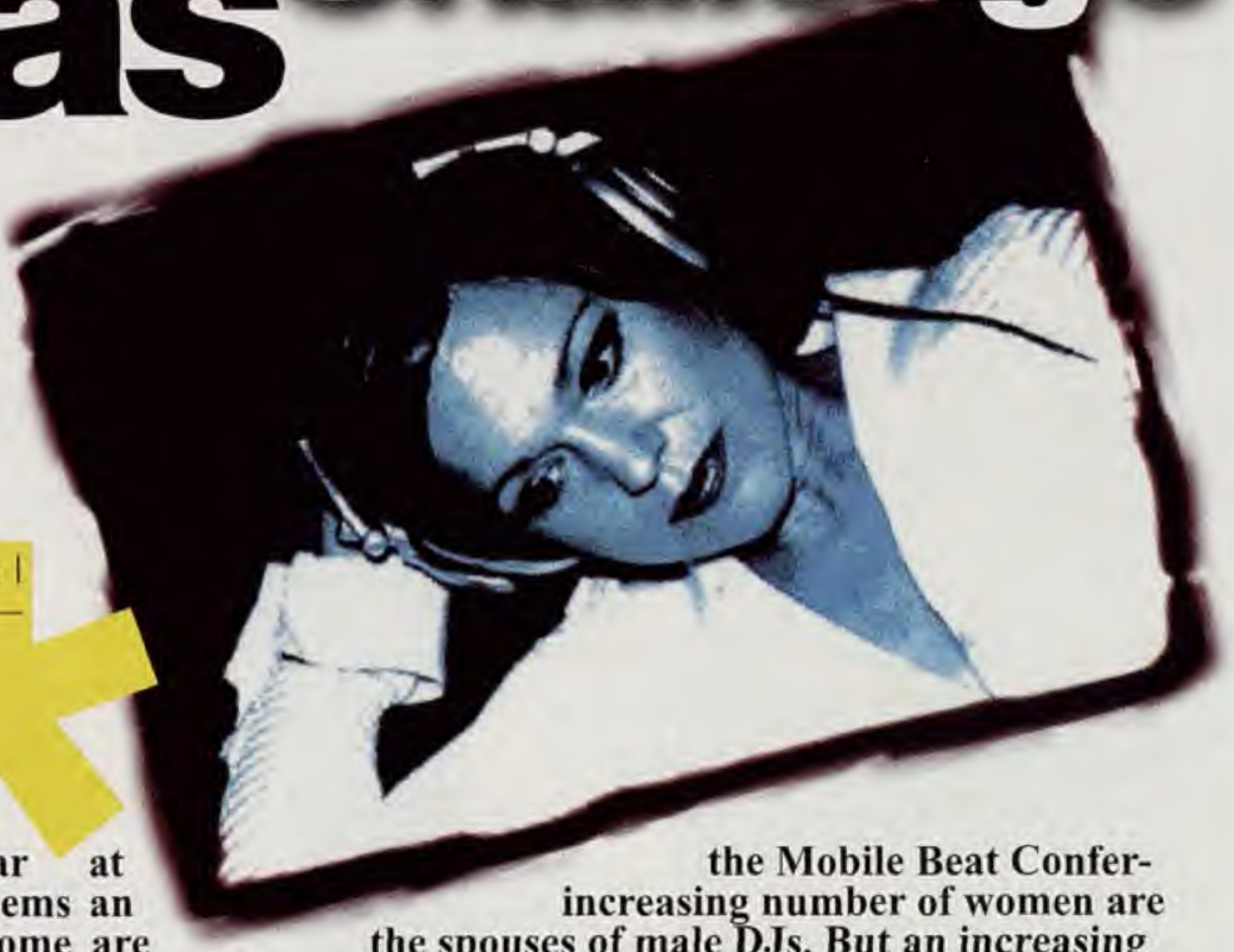
Rising to the challenge

Women continue to confront and overcome the DJ = male stereotype

By Tony Barthel



Every year at the Mobile Beat Conferences it seems an increasing number of women are present. Some are the spouses of male DJs. But an increasing number are in the profession on their own—and more often than ever, they are proprietors of their own businesses. Four years have passed since we last spoke with several ladies in the disc jockey profession to get their take on things (*Mobile Beat* #53, June/July 1999). We decided that it was high time to check back in, to see if there have been any dramatic changes in the DJ profession, from the female point of view.

Success Through Communication

Although they were located all over the country, there were several points that came up again and again among the women we spoke with. As if reading from the same script, all of the DJs indicated that they felt they had a distinct edge over their male counterparts when speaking with brides or mothers of bar/bat mitzvah celebrants.

"Women, traditionally, are more complicated—and we understand that," explained Judy Bradley from JB Jams in Gainesville, Georgia, "When I can talk to the mother of the bride, it's booked."

"I think I break the ice [with brides and mothers, etc.] better," was how Lisa Kasberg of I'm a Girl DJ Service in Ventura, California put it. "That's the magic a female has—that whole ability to pamper."

Not all the ladies were into weddings, though. "I enjoy the party aspects more than the structure of a wedding," shared Linda Germanetti of Pony Time DJ and Dance Entertainment in San Francisco, California.

Stepping beyond this pre-event, interpersonal edge, the professionals we talked to felt they also had an advantage in teaching dances and achieving interactive success.

Summing up this view, Germanetti said, "I think that I can teach dances [better] and feel more comfortable doing that. The guys are also comfortable with a woman teaching dancing." She punctuated her feelings with an observation all DJs can identify with: "Think about this: at most functions the women are the ones out there dancing."

Taking Charge

As noted above, many women have taken the reins of their own DJ businesses. Surprisingly, though, the DJs we spoke with who were multi-system operators had no female DJs working for them. JB Jams is a team of two female business partners (Judy Bradley and Suzanne Albright) but an all-male crew. I'm A Girl DJ Service features one female—Kasberg herself. According to Kasberg, "It's very difficult to find females to DJ because you need someone who is an entertainer as well as someone to pamper your client."

Outsmarting the Pounds

Since being mentioned in our last article focusing on women in the profession, the weight and bulk of DJ equipment continue to be challenging issues. While gear has gotten increasingly compact in the past few years, it still represented an obstacle for many of the DJs we spoke to. But all of them have made some move toward lightening the load.

"I just bought a set of powered speakers and I love them!" exclaimed one of the ladies. Others were in the process of looking into computer-based DJ solutions while also investigating powered speakers. All of the interviewees admitted to not being computer aficionados, but were willing to investigate the technology for the sake of both weight savings and the ability to bring along more music in a smaller package. The DJ gear industry is becoming more aware that buyers—male and female—aren't willing to lug huge cases anymore. We're gradually seeing more and more options for those who want to save their backs.

Bradley indicated that she used to have custom cases fabricated to make transportation more manageable. "I'm 5'3" and don't have the strength of a man, so we'd have gear split into various cases with handles specially placed." This DJ has dealt with more than her share of bulky gear. She started as a grip (an equipment mover) and then her interests drew her from the support side of entertainment to the performance side. Now, as case companies have become more aware of the need for lightening and splitting the load, Bradley says they can purchase cases off the shelf. Obviously, components such as amplifiers have also become incrementally lighter as well.

Germanetti has found many gear offerings that can essentially be carried with one hand. From speakers to consoles she is able to move gear without a problem, thanks to careful shopping and, quite literally, weighing her options.

She's Got the Look

Certainly, looking good is as important to the ladies as it is to the gentlemen—but not quite as easy. The infamous and ubiquitous penguin suit doesn't work for everyone.

"It took us a long time to find something comfortable that also looked good," said Bradley. Ultimately, their company's solution for its females was to have black suits custom-made.

Darlene Leal of Spotlight Karaoke, who is currently growing the DJ side of her service, said that the best choice is to give the clients different options when it comes to attire. She

normally wears a suit from Ann Taylor but also owns a number of other outfits that she has used at various events.

Creatively Coping with an Unruly Economy

All our interviewees have noticed a distinct change in the business in the past few months.

"It's been kind of spotty this year," lamented Germanetti. "Pricing seems to be more of an issue than in the past...many people don't realize what the value of a DJ is and that can be difficult."

"When I can talk to the mother of the bride, it's booked." Judy Bradley, JB Jams

All the DJs noted that customers are behaving a bit differently this year.

"It seems more last-minute now," reported Bradley. Several DJs indicated that customers who plan are not as prevalent as the last-minute shoppers, and those last-minute types are also more price-conscious.

Kasberg indicated that she has looked outside of the usual realm of expectations for profit centers. Others have also broadened their horizons.

"It's been slow and what's saved us has been our repeat customers," admitted Bradley. This year JB Jams opened a 5,000-square-foot facility that has allowed them to service customers better, but represents an increased debt load. Bradley's company has also augmented their entertainment package with other profit sources, including balloons and other decorative accessories.

Moving Forward

Clearly, women have put their unique stamp on the DJ profession and are using their creativity in a variety of ways to continue dismantling the stereotypes. More and more clients seem to be learning that the term "disc jockey" *does not necessarily mean "male."* Ultimately, the profession as a whole will continue to benefit from the female point of view and the contributions of talented women. •

You Go Girl!

Women have been taking the club scene by storm, on a global as well as local level. Our cover features DJ Shell, a leading house/trance DJ in Cleveland's burgeoning club scene. DJ All Star Aida Gabriel's travels have taken her from her home base in Canada's club capital, Toronto, all the way to the exploding scene in Moscow. (See page 62.) The dance music charts are bursting with female mixmasters like DJ Rap, DJ Colette, Sandra Collins and many others.

So, it was only a matter of time before a true "global house diva" would be recognized in a mainstream, consumer publication. That's what has happened to DJ Irene, one of the world's leading female turntable masterminds. The May issue of *O: The Oprah Magazine* featured an inspiring piece on the DJ/artist/remixer/producer (page 80). On her way to becoming DJ Irene, Irene Gutierrez overcame a host of troubles to reach success in the man's world of DJing. Among many other things, that success has included a decade-plus stint at Los Angeles' premier club, Arena; Ibiza appearances; a world tour; gigs alongside male cohorts like Armand Van Helden and John Digweed; multiple mix compilations; a number one dance single ("You're the Worst Thing for Me," under the group name Pusaka with Chris Cox of Thunderpuss), and even a remix on a Disney compilation ("Someday" by Donna Summer, on *Mouse House: Dance Mixes).*

Linda Germanetti

Judy Bradley

Suzanne Albright

Darlene Leal

Lisa Kasberg

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Making It as a Mobile: Preparation and Inspiration

By Mike Buonaccorso

The Mobile DJ Handbook, Second Edition

by Stacy Zemon
(Focal Press)

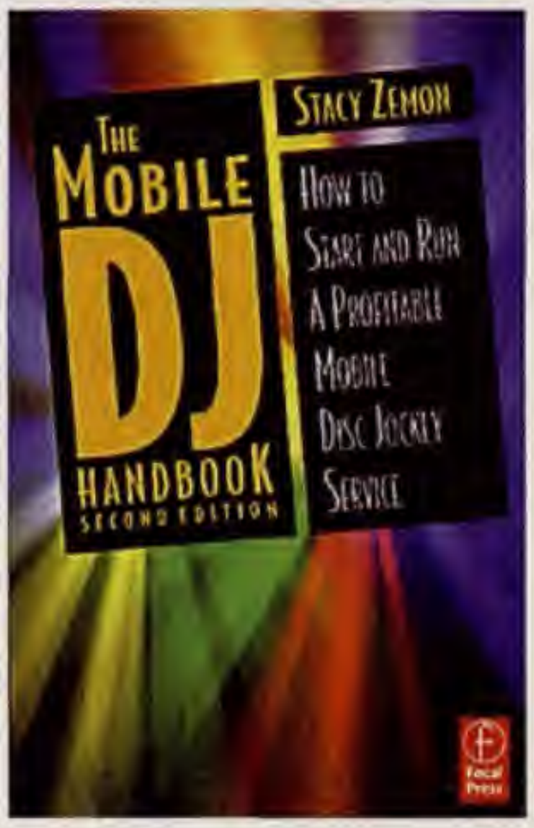
Stacy Zemon

In the Mobile DJ profession you can think of your performance as either a product or service. Either way, when what you offer your clients is consistently excellent, you will receive referrals that lead to increased bookings. Drawing on more than 25 years of combined mobile, club, karaoke, and radio experience, Stacy Zemon, one of the profession's most successful women, has created a handbook that can help you improve your performance and, in turn, your earnings.

Now available in a revised second edition, *The Mobile DJ Handbook* emphasizes professionalism and contains useful information on buying equipment and music, securing bookings, and running party dances, contests and games. Zemon conveys this information in a concise, easy-to-read manner.

Those new to the DJ business, who lack the experience, references, and connections that benefit higher-priced, established mobile disc jockeys, can get up to speed quickly with this helpful guide. And one thing leads to another: learning tips to generate more bookings will create the cash flow that is necessary to promote, improve, and expand your business.

More than being a master of ceremonies, being a DJ requires at least a basic technical knowledge of the appropriate gear. An entire chapter is devoted to Mobile DJ equipment, which isn't that different than the equipment employed by club DJs—except that Mobile DJs also need portable power amps, speakers, and lighting equipment. In addition, building a comprehensive and diverse music library is essential. Zemon provides tips on this subject and provides some helpful lists of novelty, specialty, and participation songs. She also addresses bridal introductions, bar/bat mitzvahs, and other theme/holiday parties that require extensive preparation.


Stacy Zemon
The Mobile DJ Handbook
How to Start and Run a Profitable Mobile Disc Jockey Service
Second Edition
Focal Press

With chapters on marketing, advertising, customer service and more, *The Mobile DJ Handbook* is not only an excellent resource for aspiring disc jockeys who desire to be successful in this highly competitive profession, but also for those experienced pros who want to keep ahead of the pack.

The Mobile DJ Handbook, Second Edition is available online at www.focalpress.com or at a music or book dealer near you.

Performance Beyond Expectation

by Ray Martinez
(ProDJ Publishing)

At one time or another, most Mobile DJs who have been in business for an extended period of time have probably said to themselves, "I should compile all those notes I've been jotting down over the years and write a book based on what I've been through!" Well, one disc jockey veteran did just that. The result is *Performance Beyond Expectation*, by Ray Martinez of RayMar Productions in Anaheim, Ca.

Martinez, a disc jockey whose career has spanned over thirty years, shares personal stories, photos, anecdotes and his unique collection of mobile memorabilia in his book, which is published by ProDJ Publishing.

Starting in college radio in the early seventies, Martinez moved through a career encompassing many facets of entertainment. While much of the book reflects the author's strong spiritual convictions, it is, at the same time, a useful compilation of informative personal reflections and self-help tips from others.

Performance Beyond Expectation provides an interesting collection of timeless material for long-time DJs who can relate to the author's observations on the unique nature of their chosen profession. It's also for those who are new to DJing who are looking for an idea of where the road might lead.

RAY MARTINEZ
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For information on ordering *Performance Beyond Expectation* contact ProDJ Publishing at www.prodjpublishing.com, sales@prodjpublishing.com or 800-257-7635.

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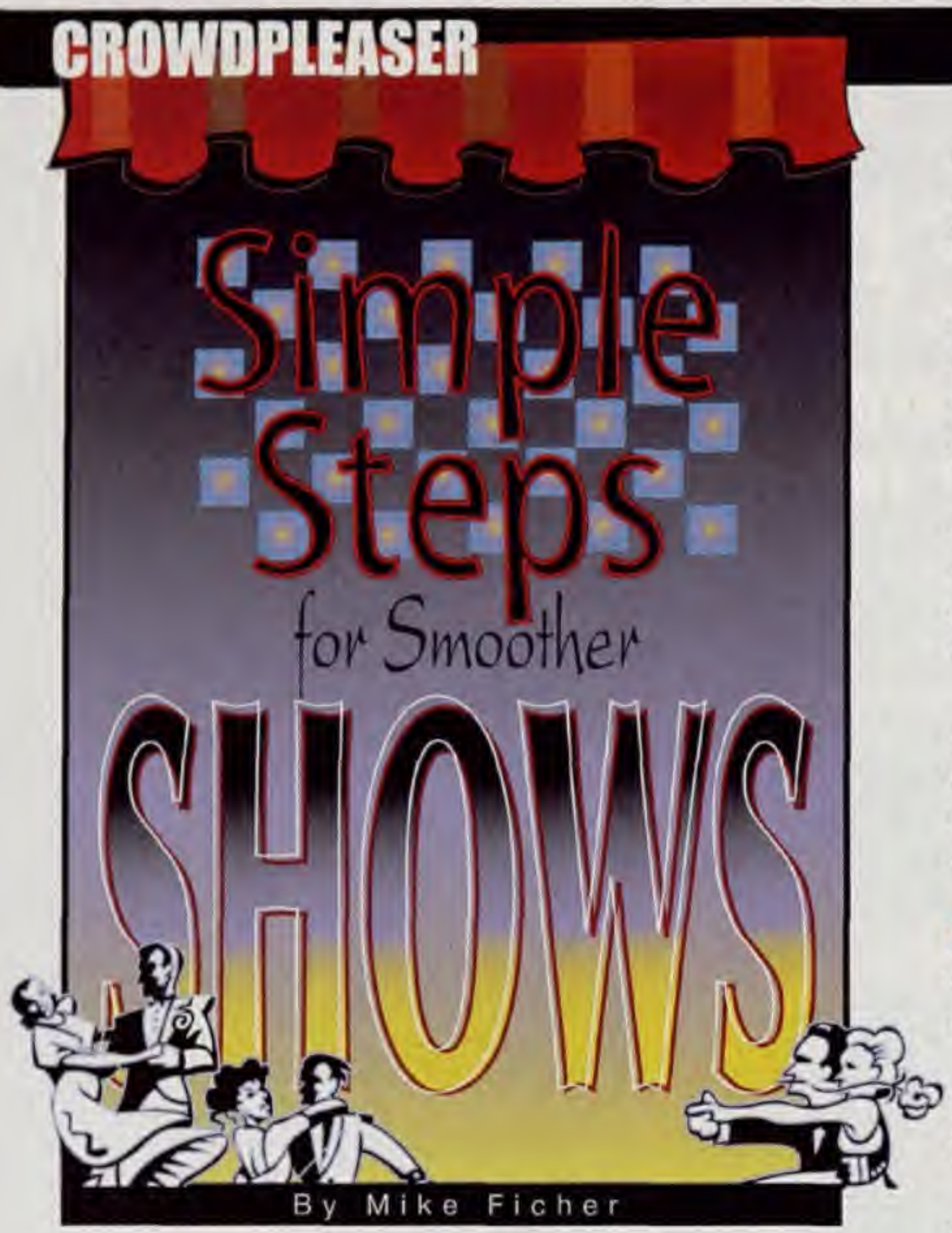

A few tips to start you down the road to a simpler DJ existence

With the world a swirling mass of seemingly infinite complexities and relentless shades of gray, the desire for simplicity is not some kind of nostalgic yearning for bygone days—it is becoming a full-fledged movement aimed at regaining a sense of control amidst the chaos.

Even in our humble profession, the search for simplicity is gaining momentum as we seek to load and unload faster, establish our on-site presence quickly and efficiently, access thousands of tracks with ease and pace, and provide our clients with a comfortable, smooth, minimally time-intrusive experience.

At Your Fingertips

Almost all mobile entertainers develop bits that are supported by pieces of music. Be it a dance instruction segment, a comedic turn with the best man or groomsmen, the limbo, or any of a multitude of audience participation or entertainment pieces, thoughtful preparation for ready access to props and music mixes can simplify the execution of the bit dramatically.

For some, this means leveraging the emerging media of digital composition and, for others, pre-mixed sets of music on CD or MiniDisc. Scott Faver of Party Favers in San Diego, CA exploits the convenience of computer-based media to simplify the execution of numerous bits at his events.

"I have all my music for the bride and groom ready to go, at my fingertips; plus alternative songs, just in case," notes Faver. "I'm never more than six seconds away from any of my 6,000-plus titles."

At Dance Express, we specialize in the integration of dance instruction and exhibitions in many of our events. For our instruction segments, we usually offer a set of music with a slower, learning-tempo song followed by the designed or preferred song for the dance. (See sidebar for examples.)

By mixing the two pieces of music into what one of our dancers, Annette Vernon, cleverly dubbed as "dance modules," we can remain on the floor, working the crowd, offering individual support, sharing a humorous observation or tendering advice on the upcoming song.

And, like Faver, we always have the songs or modules ready to go. "I spend no time at an event finding a cue point like 'Girls Just Wanna Have Fun,'" offers the active Southern California jock. "It's already set and ready to go whenever I need it."

Ready, Steady, Go

Simplifying event management can also be achieved through preparation.

Faver gathers information in pre-event meetings and employs a couple of tools to facilitate a more polished presentation.

"I use a combination of computer software and printed forms," he reports. "The software allows me to use the monitor like a TelePrompTer™. So, when I introduce the parents and the bridal party, I don't have a paper in my hand. Instead, it looks like I'm just talking to the audience."

DJ Ski of Complete Music in Little Rock, Arkansas not only completes active homework prior to an event, he uses his current event to prepare for the next gig. "I always write down equipment problems during the night to be fixed the next day," notes the veteran jock.

Go with the Flow

Simplicity also can be served by being flexible and developing the skills to respond to the natural ebb and flow of an event.

For example, on a few occasions, when we've been contracted to teach country dances as part of our presentation, we've varied the program—usually at the client's request or with the client's approval—to share a dance from a different genre. And, because we regularly practice a variety of dances, carry the necessary music, and approach each event with an open mind, we change gears without any fanfare to satisfy the crowd.

Failing to make a big deal out of a manageable situation can certainly simplify your performance execution—and enhance your client's experience.

With technology offering simpler, lighter and more efficient solutions for many of our equipment needs, we can now direct our energies to simplifying other aspects of our business to ensure that the experience is not only wonderful for our clients, but allows us to present the best show possible. It's a movement!•

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Using Modules to Connect with the Crowd

At Dance Express, we feature country, disco, '50s, '60s and/or contemporary line dances in our dance instruction segments. To facilitate continual interaction with the guests, we've organized our dance instruction musical accompaniment into mixed sets of two to four songs.

For example, for the limbo, we have an almost nine-minute mix of four limbo songs. We can fade early if we desire, but the continuous flow allows us to stay on the floor with the crowd.

For the Stroll, we also have sets ranging from two to four songs. Here are a few of our time-tested mixes or "dance modules."

STROLL
THE STROLL - DIAMONDS
C.C. RIDER - CHUCK WILLIS
WALKIN' TO NEW ORLEANS - FATS DOMINO
THE STROLL - DIAMONDS

LIMBO
LIMBO ROCK - CHUBBY CHECKER
LET'S LIMBO SOME MORE - CHUBBY CHECKER
LIMBO ROCK - CHAMPS (INSTRUMENTAL)
LIMBO ROCK - CHUBBY CHECKER

COTTON EYED REGGAE COWBOY
HEART'S DESIRE - LEEROY PARNELL (115 BPM)
I BRAKE FOR BRUNETTES - RHETT AKINS (130 BPM)

EAST COAST SWING LINE DANCE
KISS ME IN THE CAR - JOHN BARRY
ROCK MY WORLD - BROOKS AND DUNN

NEW YORK BUS STOP
FUNKYTOWN - LIPPS INC. (EXTENDED VERSION)

If you would like step charts for these or any of the other popular dances featured in our shows, plus lists of tunes for several types of line and partner dances, please visit our Web site at www.danceexpress.com and access the Resources section.

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- 300 Wrms, 1000 W peak power

GX-300

12" two way loudspeaker

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Power Company

By R.A. Lindquist

Neither rain, nor sleet, nor lack of power will keep you from your appointed sounds

Far Outlet: Next Gen from Galaxy Audio

It's been four years since we were first introduced to Galaxy Audio and their portable AC power source known as the Far Outlet. To say that this device knocked us out then would be like saying the ocean is a little salty. In our January 1999 issue we said of model 250, "This may be the most handy and practical accessory (for DJs) on the market today." Our only concern was the length of the duty-cycle of the lead acid battery at the heart of the device. Would it put up with constantly being recharged and discharged? The answer came after less than a year of occasional use when our test unit simply stopped taking a charge.

After contacting Galaxy Audio for assistance, we learned that the Far Outlet had been taken out of production for redesign—a great idea had gone back to the drawing boards.

Handling the Power—Learning the Hard Way

Late last year, we received one of the first improved units, the 300S. Choosing to err on the side of caution, we decided to let it "age" a bit, before putting it through its paces. With the arrival of spring came plenty of opportunities to use the 300S, so we took it out of the box and charged it up overnight.

One of the events was a local family gathering. The challenge for the 300S was to power two Mackie SRM450 powered speakers (400 watts total), and a mixing board. As soon as we turned on the speakers, the Far Outlet coughed and was down for the count. Inadvertently, both powered speakers had been left on, thus triggering a protection circuit to shut the unit down.

In the power pack's defense, it had mistakenly been left on for several hours prior (we're not sure how long), without a current draw. This was because, unlike with other devices, IN is OFF and OUT is ON for the Far Outlet's push-button switch. Obviously, the design reduces the possibility of accidentally turning it on. Unfortunately, we didn't have time to troubleshoot, and had to seek power from the nearest outlet.

Subsequent Sound Success

With a better understanding of the Far Outlet's operation and capabilities, we again hit the road, heading out to provide sound for a local Memorial Day ceremony. This time we brought un-powered EV

EV Sx100+ speakers and a combo mixer/amp. Things went much, much better. Using matched Audix OM2 dynamic microphones, the sound easily cut through a crowd of about 150, standing outdoors, in the rain, next to a highway. Volume was limited only by the looming specter of feedback. Regardless of the demand, the 300S was not the least bit fazed.

While we didn't have a chance to take the unit to an actual DJ gig, Yule Jabara, National Sales Manager for Galaxy Audio, reports that he's used the 300S to power a complete DJ rig consisting of a dual CDP, 2 wireless mics, a mixer, a power conditioner, a karaoke player and 1200-watt amp. (Obviously, we're trusting him not to say something he can't stand behind.) He says the Far Outlet easily powered him through three-hours of playing background music and running sound for an acoustic duo. Later, he ran the same rig—pedal to the metal—playing dance music with heavy bass. It finally ran dry after about another 45 minutes.

Know thy Limits

The moral is, if you understand what the Far Outlet 300S can and can't do, it can be a real asset for your business. When we used it with a basic PA it worked very well, shortened set-up time drastically, and saved us from having to run 500 feet of extension cord across a field. It's exponentially quieter and much lighter than a generator. It can be used to power DJ and karaoke gear, video equipment, TVs, fluorescent lights, photo gear, and even some kitchen appliances. Overall, it appears the new Far Outlet is a much-improved product in comparison to the first. It sports a much more rugged and professional design.

The key to success is to build your system around the 300S and test it out so you know in advance where the volume will max, and how long the FO will last you. We've had great success in the past teaming the Far Outlet with a Fender Passport, Peavey Escort and similar units. It may not be a Saturday-night decibel-pumper, but it can give your company the edge when a client needs a PA or some music far away from the nearest wall plug.

Galaxy Audio Far Outlet 300S – MSRP: $599.99
www.galaxyaudio.com

Walker Labs Lunch Box: Let's Eat!

For gear heads, the mere mention of a battery-powered mixer/amp has got to spike some attention, doubt and wonderment. Smaller events (karaoke house parties, PA jobs, etc.) cry out for such a mini combo unit. Add the battery and now we can toss in picnics, cabin parties and other remote locales where the power ends at the trailhead.

Blue Plate Special

If you're hungering for an extensive menu of mouth-watering features, you're in the wrong place. The Walker Labs Lunchbox 660 is a burger, fries and a Coke. It provides five input channels, four with XLR and 1/4" inputs for mics, instruments, or other music sources and one with an XLR and stereo RCA jacks for your CDP or karaoke player.

Each channel has three-band EQ and individual volume control. This simplicity of operation contributes greatly to the unit's tastiness. Completing the package is an onboard power supply, for up to eight hours of unplugged operation. A power cord is supplied for re-charging or AC operation. LEDs indicate when the battery is at full, 75%, 50%, and 25% charge. Power production is rated at 60W RMS into a 4-ohm load.

To test the relationship between power demand and battery draw, we connected the Lunchbox to two EV Sx100+ speakers and plugged in a bass guitar. At near-full power, the Lunchbox effectively limited the bass from clipping. At the same time, the LEDs indicating battery charge would blink each time a string was plucked. Conclusion: the unit is quite capable of meeting instantaneous power demand.

Band from the Box

For a real-world workout, we used the Lunchbox with the EV speakers as the stage monitor system for a local church's praise and worship team. Before setting up the larger house system, we gave the Lunchbox a few moments of playtime on the open stage. While the high school auditorium had yet to fill up, there was plenty of background chatter and clatter to overcome. It handled the task well. As for fueling the monitor system...it was a piece of cake. Guitars, keyboard and vocalists using the Audix OM2 mics came through crisp and clear.

We could nitpick about the super-sensitivity of the volume knobs at the low end, but chances are you won't be spending much time there. And we had to ask, "Why the wall wart?" Simply put, it's a heckuva lot cheaper and more reliable than an onboard power supply. We can live with that.

Walker Labs Lunchbox 660 - MSRP: $599.99
www.walker-labs.com

Also Used...

- **Audix OM2 Microphones (www.audixusa.com)**
- **EV Sx100+ Speakers (www.electrovoice.com)**
- **American Audio DCP500PRO Dual CD Player (www.americanaudio.us)**
- **Planet Waves Swivel Cables (www.planet-waves.com; see It's Hot section for more info)**

Okay Already!

By Mark Johnson

In the last issue, Roy Hanschke provided an informative article on the dynamics of public speaking. In it, he reviewed the physical elements involved in speaking clearly, using good inflections, and exuding confidence when entertaining a room full of people.

While improving our public speaking skills is definitely a valuable endeavor, there's another important aspect of public speaking that many DJs, including myself, need to improve as well: not *how* we speak, but rather *what* we say.

Radio Blah Blah

At one extreme, many club DJs say nothing at all, letting their music completely fill the event. On the other hand, radio DJs are often required to have something useful to say between virtually every song and commercial. Broadcast courses at most communication schools, as well as trade publications and other sources of information, help radio DJs generate the hours of diverse entertainment that they need to provide every week.

Radio DJs have an additional advantage as they can announce the time, weather, and event information, read product endorsements (live commercials), and conduct interviews. Include the ad-libbing that creates each radio DJ's personality, and you can see their success in having interesting things to say beyond simple song introductions.

Mobile DJs are somewhere in the middle. We cannot use any of the typical radio DJ fodder in our speaking. We need to focus on the songs, any occasional announcements ("Blue Escalade, your lights are on.") and, of course, facilitate the event's activities, like games, cake cutting etc. We certainly have a limited repertoire of things to say.

Stuck in Repeat Mode

Last New Year's Eve, I was working at a facility that included multiple party spaces. I had the opportunity to check out another DJ who was performing in one of the other rooms. I had finished before he did, so I observed his last 30 minutes while waiting in the hallway. He exhibited a habit of starting each of his brief announcements with the word "okay." "Okay, that was Frank Sinatra...here's Tony Bennett," was followed later by "Okay, will the owner of a Blue Escalade..." and then "Okay, the buffet table will be closing in a few minutes." It was peculiar, but I didn't think too much of it.

Then, a few weeks ago, I was attending an event in my community that featured a DJ along with some live music by local performers. This was a different DJ than the one from the New Year's Eve party, but he too had a repetitive vocal habit. In his case, it was the expression "all right." Like the earlier DJ, he preceded each announcement with it. He added a little more flair than the other DJ, however, sometimes stretching out "all right" to a condescending, Jim Carey-like "allll-RIGHTY-

then." At least he managed to add a variety of inflections to the same words.

Cleaning Up the Throwaways

I've long tried to choose my words carefully when making announcements, to avoid being repetitive. Last week I caught myself saying "okay" and "all right" a few times, but I do make a conscious effort to not use these words excessively.

Unless those DJs have specific reasons for using those particular words at the beginning of every announcement (for example, a company named The Okay DJs), there exists some room for improvement. Unlike Kasey Kasem ("Keep your feet on the ground...") or Michael Buffer ("Let's get rrready to rrrumble"), Mobile DJs don't typically use trademark expressions.

Thus, I suggest we work on improving our word choices in the following ways:

First, bring a video camera (as Roy Hanschke suggests) or simply a cassette recorder, and record every announcement during one of your events. While you may not want to be distracted by extra audio engineering during your performance, it's easy enough to turn it on for the last 15 seconds of each song, make your announcement, and then turn it off. You're not making a tape for anyone other than yourself.

On the drive home, pop in the tape and re-live the event the way your guests experienced it. Take note of your choice of announcements and the frequency of repeated phrases. See if you are entertained by yourself or embarrassed by anything that you said or the way you said it.

The second activity would be to listen to any upbeat radio station that has some lively personalities. In a few minutes, you'll certainly notice that they do not depend on using the same phrases repeatedly. Granted, there is a big difference between a radio DJ and a Mobile DJ; not that you would steal someone's complete style, but there's always something you can learn from other professionals.

I listened to one of New Jersey's upbeat stations and not once did I hear "okay" or "all right" as the first words of a DJ's speaking segment. Perhaps these words don't really mean to say anything except to announce that the DJ is about to say something else.

If you find that these throwaway words help get your announcement going, then mix them up using "okay," "all right," "and now, ladies & gentlemen," or even "may I have your attention please." I can understand the value of these ice-breaking words, but using the same word over and over throughout a four-hour event can only be tedious. Okay? All right.•

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Making the intangible tangible to prospective wedding clients

SELLING SOMETHING They Can't SEE

By Peter Merry

When trying to effectively market your wedding entertainment services, it can be difficult to demonstrate your unique qualities in a way that your prospective clients can easily comprehend and perceive.

Seeing Is Believing

Wedding photographers can share their latest display albums; videographers can show their latest demo videos; cake chefs can show you their latest creations in flour, water and fancy frosting and even offer a free tasting; florists can share their best arrangements; and the bridal boutiques will encourage the bride to try on dozens of dresses so she can see how she *might actually look on her wedding day.*

These are all great examples of marketing products that are tangible and can be seen, tasted, smelled, touched and examined with care. But we provide a service, and in the words of Harry Beckwith, "In most cases, you (your clients) buy a service touch, taste, feel, smell and sight unseen."[1] So what does this tell us?

Our services are invisible to our clients until we actually deliver them. Learning to sell the invisible is the fifth key in creating a service-focused marketing plan.

Word Perfect

So, how do we sell something that our clients can't see? First, *it is vital to paint a mental picture of your services in your marketing* materials and during your sales consultations. This can *be done in a variety of ways.*

A good place to begin is with the words your clients have already been using to describe how they are picturing their reception. Words like *fun, interactive, entertaining, energetic, lively, exciting, unforgettable, unique, memorable, meaningful, personal, intimate, romantic, emotional, sentimental, stress-free, care-free, well-organized, relaxed, comfortable, smooth-flowing, elegant, classy, formal,* and *traditional* can be used to create an image in your prospective client's mind of the kind of unique service you will provide for them. Ask your prospects which words describe their desired outcome, then build on them to describe the ways you can make their vision into a reality.

Painting Pictures

Your marketing materials should paint a targeted but general picture of the type of wedding entertainment services you provide. In your sales consultations, you should create a more detailed and specific description of your services, in line with your prospective client's desires and concerns. But be sure you fully understand their vision, preferences and style before attempting to create this mental image of your service in action; otherwise, you may unknowingly paint the wrong impression and subsequently lose the sale.

A good tactic is to not only ask for their descriptive words, but to also boldly ask them to describe their past bad *experiences with DJ entertainment, including things they* are fearful about when considering a DJ for their wedding

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Begin with the words your clients have already been using to describe how they are picturing their reception.

entertainment needs. This process is analogous to probing for landmines before crossing into uncharted territory. For example, if your prospect hates the tried and true "Y.M.C.A." routine with the silly hats, the last thing you want to do is tell them how you can use the "Y.M.C.A." routine to make their wedding reception lots of fun.

If you'd like to learn more about this subject, I highly recommend reading *Selling the Invisible* and *The Invisible Touch* by Harry Beckwith. His books on service marketing and delivering quality services are invaluable tools and have served as the primary inspiration for my interest in researching, presenting and writing about service-focused marketing for wedding DJs.

Building an Image

What other practical things can you do to help your clients envision you as their only choice for their wedding entertainment needs? Here are some ideas...

Keeping in mind that you never get a second chance to make a first impression, it is imperative that you match or exceed the dress code of your prospective clients. If you show up for a first consultation in shorts and a T-shirt, don't be surprised if they have a hard time imagining you on the microphone in front of all of their friends and family. A suit and tie tends to be the best choice, but business casual can work in some settings as well.

It is also wise to be prepared with the right questions to help you develop a clear picture of who your clients are and what exactly they are hoping to find in their wedding entertainer of choice. Here are some good questions to help you get started:

How did the two of you meet?
How long have you been dating?
When did you get engaged?
How did you pop the question?
What do you both do for a living?
Where will your wedding reception take place?
How many guests are you expecting?
How many bridesmaids and groomsmen will you have in your wedding party?
What are your wedding colors?
Will your parents be attending the wedding?
Are they still married to each other? If so, for how long?
What is the furthest distance your guests will be traveling to attend your wedding?
Have you selected an event coordinator?
Have you selected a photographer?
Have you selected a videographer?
What three words would you choose to describe your wedding reception?
Have you seen any DJ entertainment that you didn't like or enjoy?
What is your biggest concern or fear about hiring a wedding DJ?

Be sure to write out more questions on your own to help you fully understand each of your clients' unique wedding reception visions. Then, once you have a confident grasp of what they are looking for in wedding entertainment, begin painting a detailed mental picture for them. Convince them that you fully understand their desires and in turn, you will become the only person they can picture at their reception to ensure that they will have the wedding entertainment experience of their dreams.

Next time we will examine the sixth and final key in developing service-focused marketing: recognizing who is being served. •

Peter Merry has owned and operated Last Dance Entertainment out of Southern California for over 8 years. He is currently the President of the American Disc Jockey Association and he has been a regular seminar contributor at Mobile Beat DJ Shows. For more information, go to www.PeterMerry.com.

[1] *Harry Beckwith,* Selling the Invisible *(Warner Books, 1997) Introduction, xvi.*

Here's Looking At You Kid

Since its debut in the July issue of Mobile Beat magazine, S.A.M. has been getting more than a second look from DJs and KJs.

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Sprucing Up Your Web Site

By Reid Goldsborough

Regular cleaning will make sure your corner of the Web sparkles

Spring is the traditional time to tidy up, to go about discarding the no longer useful, dusting off what you decide to keep, and adding anything needed. But you can do spring-cleaning any time of year—to a home page as well as a home.

Web experts advise you to periodically evaluate your site to determine what's working and what needs to be improved, whether you have a homespun Web site consisting of a few pages or a multileveled, multimedia-rich e-business site. You can use various software programs for this.

The two most popular programs for creating and maintaining Web sites are Macromedia Dreamweaver, a sophisticated program used more by professional designers (www.macromedia.com/dreamweaver), and Microsoft FrontPage, an easy-to-use program used more by home and small business do-it-yourselfers (www.microsoft.com/frontpage).

Adobe GoLive, the third most popular Web authoring program (www.adobe.com/golive), is a terrific program that's both easy to use and sophisticated. It's targeted at Web design newcomers as well as seasoned pros.

I asked GoLive's product manager, George Arriola, about sprucing up a Web site, using his program or any other, and he offered some good advice.

Clean Out the Garage

First, look for stale, outdated content, says Arriola. The Web is all about the new. Because information is easily updated, it should be up-to-date. If a site is cluttered up with musty detritus, it will only reflect poorly on you or your organization.

GoLive, Dreamweaver, and FrontPage all let you check

which pages were most recently, and least recently, updated.

Look for broken internal links, which point to pages within your site, and external links, which point to other Web sites. If more than a couple of links no longer work, this can create the impression that the rest of your site is obsolete as well. Many Web authoring programs automate this process.

Clean out folders of old files and scripts you're no longer using. There's no point wasting the disk space.

Update old contact information. The Internet Age is the age of connectivity. If people can't reach you, why put up a Web site in the first place?

Add Fresh Paint

Give your site a face-lift to improve navigation, usability, and accessibility. Arriola is a proponent of Web design guru Jakob Nielsen's two-click rule: Users should be able to find content they're after in two clicks rather than having to burrow several levels down. If information at your site is too hard to find, users may look elsewhere, in a couple of clicks.

If you don't already have one, consider adding an internal search engine to your site. Atomz Corp. (www.atomz.com) lets you easily add either a simple or sophisticated search engine and sends you a periodic report of what visitors are searching for. The simple search engine is free, though available only for sites with fewer than 500 pages.

Consider incorporating graphical and other enhancements, provided they don't bog down users. Examples include animations, audio clips, or video clips that offer useful substance such as product demonstrations. Another option is adding a wireless interface for those accessing your site using a mobile device.

Gut the First Floor

Some Web experts say that active sites should be revamped every two or three years. Reasons to redesign a site include new directions in your organization, changing ways that people use your site, and new Web technology.

Depending on where your site is hosted, you may be able to use software to analyze which sections of your site are receiving the most and the least traffic and to identify any problems visitors may be experiencing in surfing your site. Virtual hosting companies and some ISPs can provide this information for you. If you're hosting your site yourself, various software programs can do the trick.

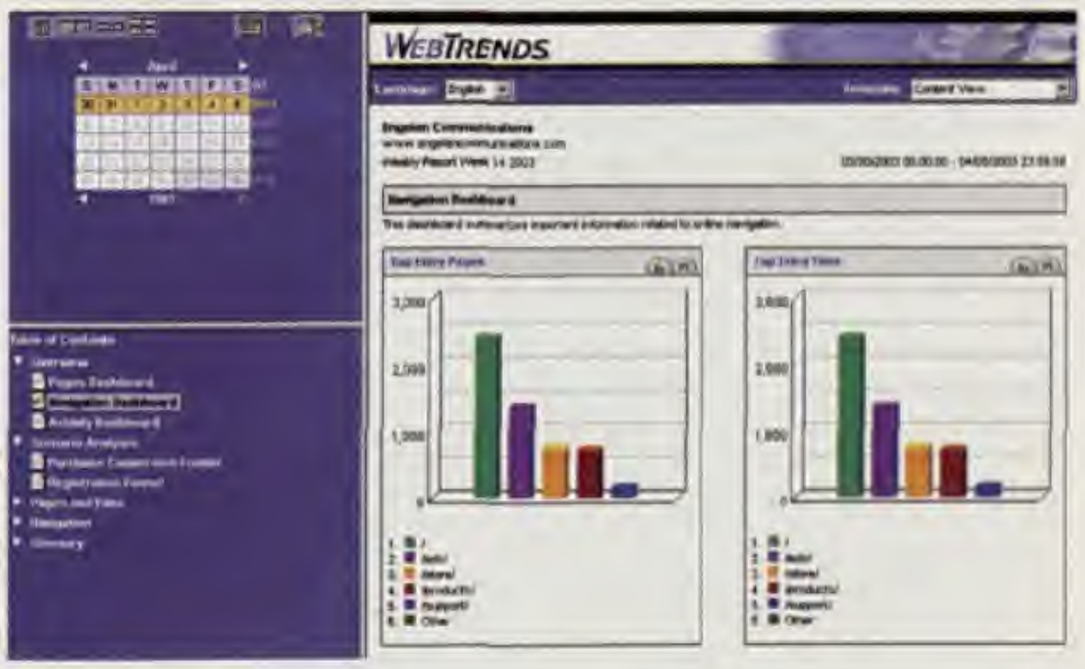
For obtaining Web metrics and analytics about your site, a number of companies offer solutions, including NetIQ Corp. (www.netiq.com/webtrends), Accrue Software (www.accrue.com), and WebSideStory (www.websidestory.com).

Options in try-before-you-buy software include Absolute Log Analyzer from BitStrike Software (www.bitstrike.com), SiteVigil Pro from Silurian Software (www.silurian.com), and LinkTrakker DUO from Internet Total Solutions (www.affiliatesbusiness.com).

Using this information can prompt decisions to close down some areas of your site or move them so they'll be more accessible or to beef up your hardware.

Finally, consider doing site testing with real people. Whether you hire a company to do this for you or do it yourself more informally, such testing can help you do the most important thing you can do in designing and maintaining a Web site: adopt a users' perspective.•

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of the book Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway. He can be reached at reidgold@netaxs.com or www.netaxs.com/~reidgold/column.



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DJWebmin: Internet Business Control Center

By Dan Walsh

Business software capabilities—with no installation required

Imagine if you will...your DJ business is growing and you've decided to add some performers to your roster of talent. You know it's time to move to the next level of digital technology in order to get your business organized—and stay there. Some new software is sure to do the trick. Your first thought is probably to invest in one of the growing number of powerful DJ business applications on the market. But now there's one more option available: **DJWebmin**—a Web-based Mobile DJ booking solution.

Welcome to Webware

DJWebmin provides all the essential functions of typical off-line DJ software. It tracks information on dates, performers, venues, clients, sales calls, appointments, advertisements,

event packages, add-ons, and more. It can generate business activity reports and even give you directions to your gigs, via Yahoo.

So how does using a Web-based system differ from having the software actually installed on your computer? For one thing, it can help you create a "virtually networked" office, with all your important info accessible from any computer with Internet access. DJs can find out what they need to know, whether they're at home, at work, or somewhere with a laptop that can connect to the Web.

"But wait. What if I can't connect?" I hear you saying. Well, DJWebmin claims "99.977% uptime" for their server. Obviously, if you're offering a Web-based service, you're going to do everything you can to guarantee unhindered access. They also perform back-ups on separate off-line servers to safeguard your data. If it's simply a matter of needing to check out your information while not online, an off-line viewing appli-

cation is provided, free of charge. The one big variable is your ability to get reliably connected.

Speaking of charges, there's another difference between software and "webware." For software, you'll usually pay a pretty hefty one-time purchase price, and then pay periodically for upgrades. Multiple-user licenses can also add up, if you want to create a networked system in-house. With DJWebmin, a $99 per year fee covers multiple users. Very predictable. Upgrades just happen, without any effort on your end. If you are a dedicated single operator, you only pay $49.

Is This Thing On?

When I actually took DJWebmin for a virtual spin, I was impressed with its streamlined interface. Rather than pulling down menus or opening a bunch of windows, entering information and editing preferences was a matter of typing into fields and clicking buttons. I was using a high-speed cable modem connection, so the system reacted quickly to my input. I shudder to imagine how a dial-up connection would deal with this type of setup. I'm assuming that most of you, dear readers, are using cable or DSL services, at least for business purposes. If not, you'll want to switch before considering DJWebmin as a serious option. (Unless you like waiting, of course.)

Just like getting started with any digital business management solution, be prepared for a lot of data entry with DJWebmin as well. Some things are hard to escape.

Webware, in general, is not about bells and whistles; DJWebmin may not fit every company's organizational needs. But if you are looking for a lean, cost-effective alternative to traditional software, it's worth a look. Go to **www.djwebmin.com** for more info and to sign up for a free trial.•

10 TIPS FOR SMOOTHER SHOWS

1. Use premixed music sets saved on disc or DJ software.
2. Fully utilize your player's features (hardware or software) by pre-loading cue points for "special moments."
3. Carry a large variety of music—be ready to switch gears, rather than have to say, "I'm sorry. We don't have that."
4. Pay attention to difficulties at your current gig in order to troubleshoot and solve problems for your next gig.
5. Use MS PowerPoint or other presentation software as a "teleprompter" for announcements.
6. Allow yourself more than enough lead-time before the job in case of transportation or equipment problems.
7. Test your wireless microphone from all points on the floor and make sure it is equalized properly so that you can be heard above the crowd.
8. Keep an open line of communication with the client, hall manager and other professionals (such as the photographer) who are working the event.
9. Bring extra cables, cords, and back-up equipment.
10. Assemble a small "emergency kit" with such handy items as a needle and thread, Band Aids, a few tools, adapters, etc. and keep it with your gear.

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By David Kreiner

Pacific DJ spins soundtrack for fantasylands of sand, surf and sun

Born and raised in Hawaii, DJ John Kamahele (comma-hey-lay) began his career back in 1985 at a club called Masquerade, the number one club in Hawaii at that time. After two years of being an apprentice, he had fine-tuned his DJ skills and worked his way into two residencies (Black Angus/Cattle Company and Bobby McGee's). Several appearances in the San Francisco area also followed over the next three years.

In 1990 he took a break from the club scene and pursued two years of college at the University of Hawaii. While on this brief hiatus, he not only worked at academics, but also took an interest in the latest music to hit the East Coast. In 1992 he got back in the game, and within a year worked his way into another residency at the club that would lead the resurgence of nightlife in Hawaii.

The Blue Zebra played host to 5,000 guests every week and featured some of the best DJs in Hawaii at the time. The sound of the club was augmented by John's ability to fuse hip-hop, R&B, rap, reggae, and modern rock with different styles of house music, all spiced with a distinctive Latin house flavor. DJs from other nightclubs would come by the Zebra just to get in sets of house music that they couldn't play at their own venues.

Shifting Sands

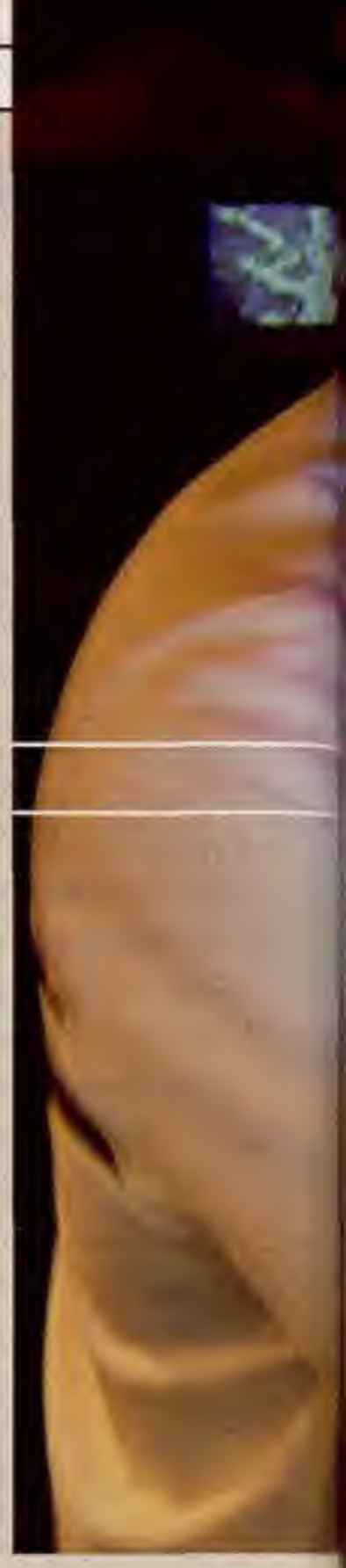
In 1998 John spread his wings and ventured on to the fast-paced lifestyle of Las Vegas. He was recruited by one of the hottest clubs in Vegas at the time, The Beach. With programming skills that were second to none, John quickly secured not only a residency there, but was also promoted to Music Director.

During the next two years, John hit on the idea of securing a second residency at a club that was completely different. At the time, Vegas was getting hit hard with a progressive/UK hard house sound. John was feeling an itch to get back into a variety of house styles and he figured that it would be a great accomplishment to have two different residencies in two completely different nightclubs, playing two extremely different types of music.

In February 2000, John achieved his goal by landing a Saturday-night residency at club Ra, the nightclub located in the Luxor Hotel and Casino. Since then, he's opened for DJs like Deep Dish, ATB, Harry "Choo Choo" Romero, Mike Rizzo, Razor & Guido, Jimmy Van M, DJ Skribble, and Jerry Bonham, just to name a few. Every Saturday night you can catch John at Ra, throwing down an exciting set of house music featuring lots of vocals, along with tribal and progressive beats. He's fine-tuning his skills under the influence of Ra's premier resident and world-class DJ, Duane King.

Meanwhile, back at The Beach, John has continued to program R&B, hip-hop, rap, disco, modern rock, and dance music—a wide variety that's aimed at the club's large college crowd. John has also introduced The Beach to some of the latest technology available to DJs today, namely Final Scratch by Stanton. The Beach was the very first club in Las Vegas to use this software tool, which allows you to control music files playing on your computer with a vinyl record. (Look for *Mobile Beat's* in-depth review of the latest version of Final Scratch in an upcoming issue–*Ed.*). He also brought the next generation in music video to The Beach by way of a new system called Screenplay. This PC-based video system utilizes a Numark CD controller to cue and play videos just like you would cue and play CDs. The system holds around 4,000 music videos and is reportedly simple to control.

When we cornered him for a few minutes, a busy DJ John Kamahele had this to say...



***MB**: Does the new technology like Final Scratch make things easier or harder?*

John Kamahele: New technology is always geared toward making things easier; however the hardest part is getting everything dialed in just right. Final Scratch is a great tool because it allows you to have thousands of songs with you at all times—no more carrying heavy record crates and CD books. Searching for the song you need is a snap! I buy most of my music on vinyl and then transfer to my computer as WAV files. After slight editing, I burn to a CD and then to hard drive. That way I always have my vinyl and the CD as backup.

***MB**: Do you use the software exclusively or do you also use turntables?*

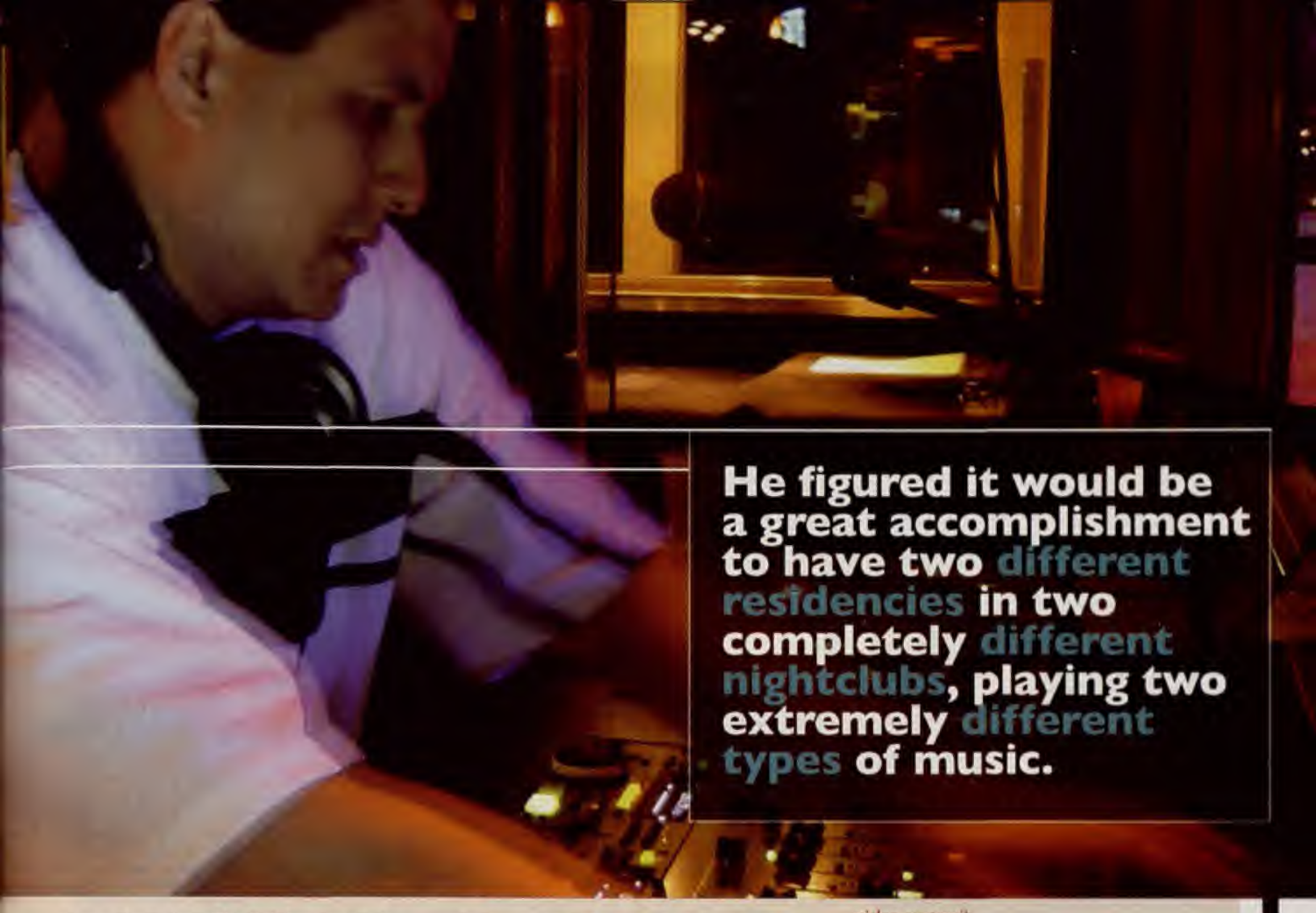
JK: The turntables are a must to make Final Scratch work. I go back and forth between FS vinyl and regular vinyl. The great thing about FS is that the FS vinyl can be any song you want it to be, you can even have the same song on both records.

***MB**: Do you take your laptop to every gig?*

JK: I have Final Scratch on both PC and Mac (for version OS X). At The Beach, I have a PC tower that's designated as the Final Scratch computer. At Ra and any other gig, including when I travel, I'll take my Mac laptop with me.

***MB**: What type of audio and lighting gear is utilized at Ra?*

JK: Ra has a state of the art Turbo Sound system. In fact, a lot of the audio components were specifically designed by Turbo Sound for Ra. The DJ booth is phenomenal because you have several choices of mixers you can use at any given time and you can even switch mixers during your set. The amenities are endless and you can hook up just about any peripheral



He figured it would be a great accomplishment to have two different residencies in two completely different nightclubs, playing two extremely different types of music.

at any given time. The lighting system is phenomenal as well! Everything is High End and Martin intelligent lighting. There must be about 80 or 90 fixtures on the stage and dance floor. Casinos have tons of money!

***MB**: Where do you see musical styles heading?*

JK: Music is already so R&B/hip-hop-driven and it's been that way for a few years now. I only can speak for the current market I work in...in the last few years more of the clubs have converted some or all of their nights toward R&B/hip-hop. When you turn on the radio in Vegas you can't find a station that plays dance or house music, and if you do, it's only once a week for a couple of hours at 2 AM. I think that R&B/hip-hop will overshadow the market for a while more, but on the upside, I'm fortunate that I work at a club (Ra) that maintains a commitment toward a progressive sound. Duane King (resident DJ/Music Director) has always kept Ra on the cutting edge.

***MB**: What type of music do you enjoy playing the most?*

JK: I really enjoy playing vocal house and all forms of tribal house. I like music that has a lot of acoustic piano or percussions mixed in with a great female vocal.

***MB**: Do you do any mobile or non-nightclub DJ gigs?*

JK: I don't have any right now because my time is pretty much spent at both of the clubs I'm at.

***MB**: What effect does the Screenplay video system (at The Beach) have on your overall programming style?*

JK: The Screenplay system makes a huge difference in the way that you program video because you have to try and mix songs together without using pitch control. The key is to know your music and be good at cueing your song so that it comes in on phrase. The toughest part is that usually the beats only stay on for about 4 to 6 beats. Overall, you have to try and program your night so that you can get to a variety of music...being able to strategically "slam" songs in is a key element. Customers get a kick out of the videos and they wonder how we do it.

***MB**: So you do live beat-mixing with the video system?*

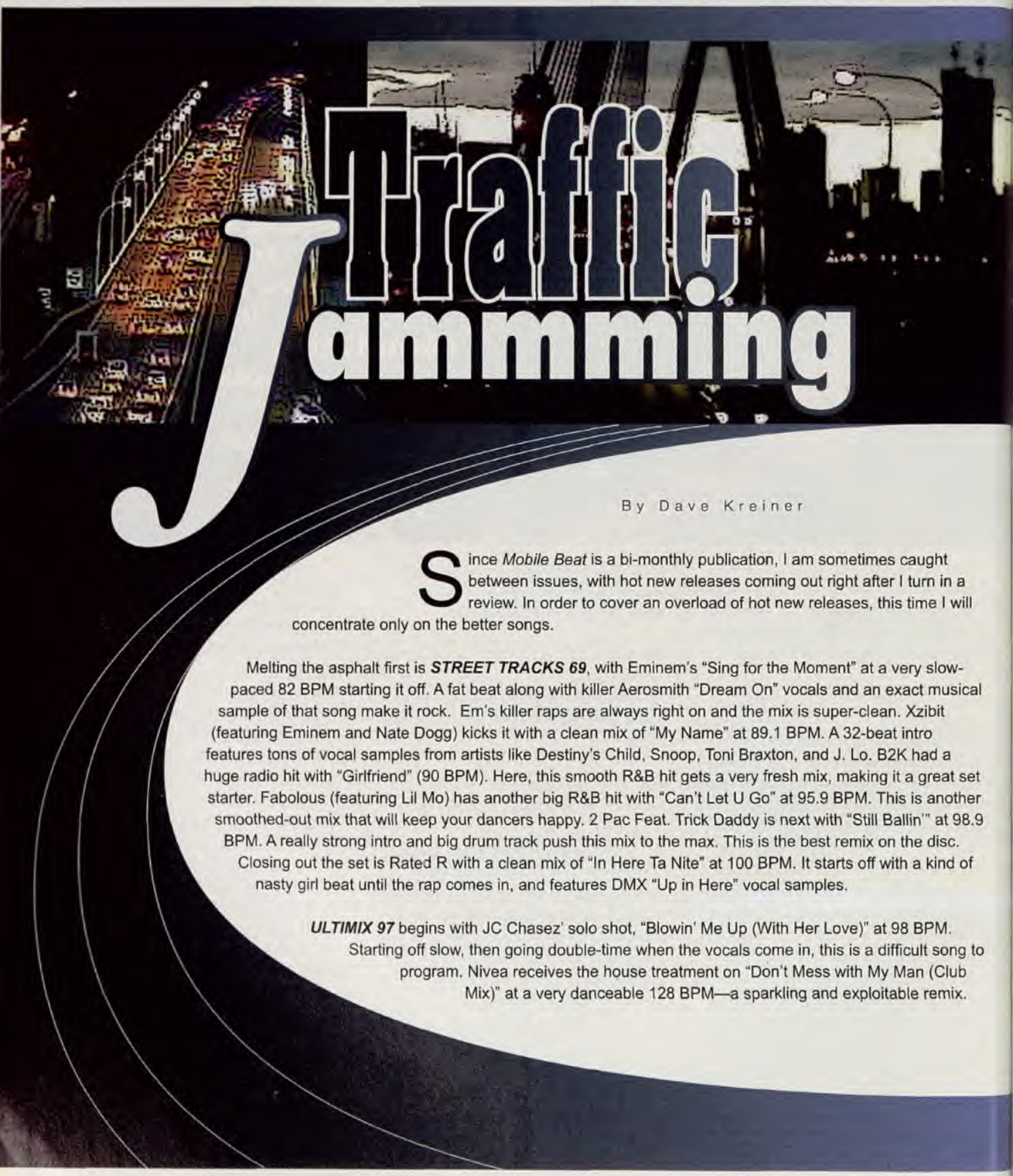
JK: All of the video pieces are mixed live. Anytime you see a video in the club, it's the actual video that's playing. It's as close to beat-on-beat as I can get without pitch control for video.

***MB**: Most DJs are used to working 8-2 AM. What time do you finish your gigs?*

JK: The times vary. At Ra, I play the first half of the night, which is house music and I get done about 3 AM. At The Beach I'm the head guy, so I finish anywhere between 3 AM and 5 AM.

All In all, John has experienced a lot of success over the years: there aren't very many DJ's who have residencies in two drastically different venues. When it comes to music, he's a chameleon and can adjust to just about any style of music. He's as humble as they come, and when I asked him if he wanted to see his name in lights someday, his reply was, "The only place I want to see my name is on my paycheck!" •

David Kreiner is a nightclub consultant and the owner of The Source DJ Music Supply. Surf/shop www.thesourceformusic.com or call 800-775-3472 for more info.



Traffic Jammming

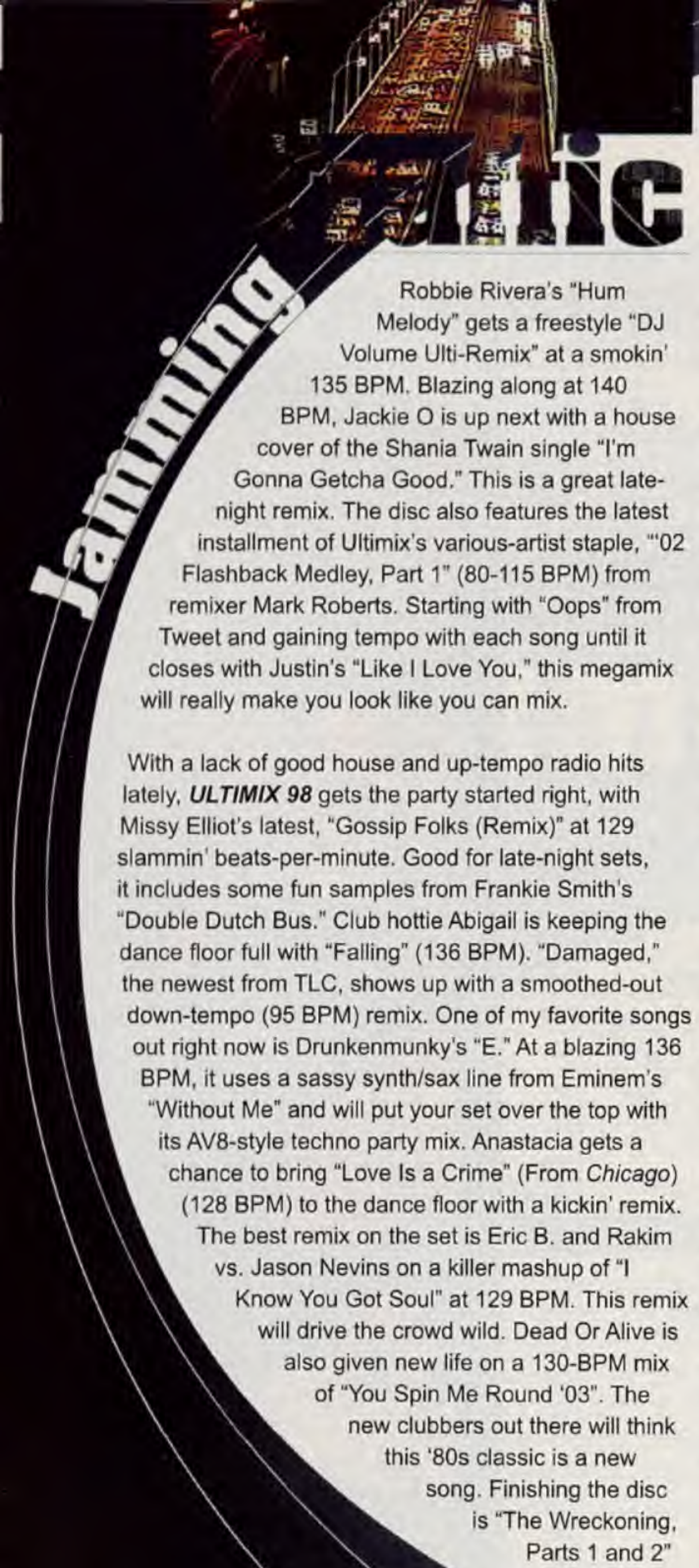
By Dave Kreiner

Since *Mobile Beat* is a bi-monthly publication, I am sometimes caught between issues, with hot new releases coming out right after I turn in a review. In order to cover an overload of hot new releases, this time I will concentrate only on the better songs.

Melting the asphalt first is ***STREET TRACKS 69***, with Eminem's "Sing for the Moment" at a very slow-paced 82 BPM starting it off. A fat beat along with killer Aerosmith "Dream On" vocals and an exact musical sample of that song make it rock. Em's killer raps are always right on and the mix is super-clean. Xzibit (featuring Eminem and Nate Dogg) kicks it with a clean mix of "My Name" at 89.1 BPM. A 32-beat intro features tons of vocal samples from artists like Destiny's Child, Snoop, Toni Braxton, and J. Lo. B2K had a huge radio hit with "Girlfriend" (90 BPM). Here, this smooth R&B hit gets a very fresh mix, making it a great set starter. Fabolous (featuring Lil Mo) has another big R&B hit with "Can't Let U Go" at 95.9 BPM. This is another smoothed-out mix that will keep your dancers happy. 2 Pac Feat. Trick Daddy is next with "Still Ballin'" at 98.9 BPM. A really strong intro and big drum track push this mix to the max. This is the best remix on the disc. Closing out the set is Rated R with a clean mix of "In Here Ta Nite" at 100 BPM. It starts off with a kind of nasty girl beat until the rap comes in, and features DMX "Up in Here" vocal samples.

ULTIMIX 97 begins with JC Chasez' solo shot, "Blowin' Me Up (With Her Love)" at 98 BPM. Starting off slow, then going double-time when the vocals come in, this is a difficult song to program. Nivea receives the house treatment on "Don't Mess with My Man (Club Mix)" at a very danceable 128 BPM—a sparkling and exploitable remix.

STREET TRACKS 69		
SING FOR THE MOMENT	EMINEM	82
IN HERE TA NITE	RATED R	100
STILL BALLIN'	2 PAC feat. TRICK DADDY	98.9
CAN'T LET U GO	FABOLOUS feat. LIL MO	95.9
GIRLFRIEND	B2K	90
MY NAME (CD Bonus)	XZIBIT feat. EMINEM & NATE DOGG	89.1
ULTIMIX 97		
BLOWIN' ME UP (WITH HER LOVE)	JC CHASEZ	98
HUM MELODY (DJ Volume Ulti-Remix)	ROBBIE RIVERA	135
TIC TOC (Club Mix)	LEANN RIMES	128
ULTIMIX '02 FLASHBACK MEDLEY PT. 1	VARIOUS	80-115
DON'T MESS WITH MY MAN (Club Mix)	NIVEA	128
TRY IT ON MY OWN	WHITNEY HOUSTON	132
I'M GONNA GETCHA GOOD	JACKIE O	140
ULTIMIX 98		
FALLING	ABIGAIL	136
E	DRUNKENMUNKY	136
I KNOW YOU GOT SOUL	ERIC B & RAKIM vs. JASON NEVINS	129
GOSSIP FOLKS (Remix)	MISSY ELLIOT	129
DAMAGED	TLC	95
LOVE IS A CRIME (From *Chicago*)	ANASTACIA	128
BURN FOR YOU	KREO	127
YOU SPIN ME ROUND '03	DEAD OR ALIVE	130
THE WRECKONING PTS. 1 AND 2 (CD-Only)	BOOMKAT	95/133
FUNKYMIX 67		
IN DA CLUB	50 CENT	90
TWURKULATOR PT. II	KIZZY ROCK feat. YING YANG TWINS	102
SUPERMAN	EMINEM	130
B R RIGHT	TRINA	136
CRY ME A RIVER	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	80
WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT BOY	BABY feat. CLIPSE	93
IGNITION REMIX	R. KELLY	133
HELL YEAH	GINUWINE feat. BABY	88
FEELIN' YOU PT. II (CD Bonus)	SOLANGE feat. N.O.R.E.	81
FUNKYMIX 68		
GET BUSY	SEAN PAUL	100
I CAN	NAS	95
COUNTRY GIRL PT. 1 & PT. 2	DF DUB	88
CAN'T LET YOU GO	FABOLOUS feat. LIL' MO	96
SING FOR THE MOMENT	EMINEM	82
A.D.I.D.A.S.	KILLER MIKE	93
DJ 2ND NATURE'S '02 HIP HOP FLASHBACK MEDLEY	VARIOUS	83-115



Remixing Classic

Robbie Rivera's "Hum Melody" gets a freestyle "DJ Volume Ulti-Remix" at a smokin' 135 BPM. Blazing along at 140 BPM, Jackie O is up next with a house cover of the Shania Twain single "I'm Gonna Getcha Good." This is a great late-night remix. The disc also features the latest installment of Ultimix's various-artist staple, "'02 Flashback Medley, Part 1" (80-115 BPM) from remixer Mark Roberts. Starting with "Oops" from Tweet and gaining tempo with each song until it closes with Justin's "Like I Love You," this megamix will really make you look like you can mix.

With a lack of good house and up-tempo radio hits lately, ***ULTIMIX 98*** gets the party started right, with Missy Elliot's latest, "Gossip Folks (Remix)" at 129 slammin' beats-per-minute. Good for late-night sets, it includes some fun samples from Frankie Smith's "Double Dutch Bus." Club hottie Abigail is keeping the dance floor full with "Falling" (136 BPM). "Damaged," the newest from TLC, shows up with a smoothed-out down-tempo (95 BPM) remix. One of my favorite songs out right now is Drunkenmunky's "E." At a blazing 136 BPM, it uses a sassy synth/sax line from Eminem's "Without Me" and will put your set over the top with its AV8-style techno party mix. Anastacia gets a chance to bring "Love Is a Crime" (From *Chicago*) (128 BPM) to the dance floor with a kickin' remix. The best remix on the set is Eric B. and Rakim vs. Jason Nevins on a killer mashup of "I Know You Got Soul" at 129 BPM. This remix will drive the crowd wild. Dead Or Alive is also given new life on a 130-BPM mix of "You Spin Me Round '03". The new clubbers out there will think this '80s classic is a new song. Finishing the disc is "The Wreckoning, Parts 1 and 2" (95/133 BPM) from Boomkat.

On the hip hop/R&B tip are the two latest from Funkymix. ***FUNKYMIX 67*** starts off with the biggest single in a number of years: 50 Cent's "In Da Club" (90 BPM). What can you say about an amazing song, except get this mix and play it loud! Kizzy Rock (featuring the Ying Yang Twins) brings a 102-BPM Dirty South hit, "Twurkulator, Part II". Eminem's "Superman" gets the house/booty treatment (130 BPM). Another booty remix, just in time for the summer, is Trina's "B R Right" at 136 BPM. This remix kicks butt and is a must-have version. Taking the tempo down is Justin Timberlake with "Cry Me A River" at 80 BPM. This is a good set-starter. The huge radio hit "What Happened to That Boy" from Baby (featuring Clipse) is here at 93 BPM with a sharp mix. Also storming radio, R. Kelly's "Ignition Remix" (133 BPM) gets a multi-tempo mix that starts off with high beats, then goes to half-time on the verse. Ginuwine (featuring Baby) is next with "Hell Yeah" at 88 BPM—yet another big radio hit. It's given a nice remix from Mark Roberts. Closing out the set is Beyonce's sister, Solange (featuring N.O.R.E.) with "Feelin' You, Part II" (81 BPM).

Lastly, we'll check out ***FUNKYMIX 68***. One of my favorite musical styles right now is dancehall, and Sean Paul is the dancehall man right now with "Get Busy" (100 BPM). This single will be huge all summer long! Dancehall music was in every club I went to during Winter Music Conference in Miami last March. NAS has seen a lot of radio action with the very positive "I Can" (95 BPM). Finally, some positive vibes! Df Dub is represented with two remix flavors: "Country Girl Part 1 and Part 2" at 88 BPM. An AC/DC "Back in Black" guitar sample is done well. Killer Mike brings another endorsement song with A.D.I.D.A.S. at 93 BPM. Eminem is here with "Sing for the Moment" at 82 BPM. This is another clean mix of the song, featuring Aerosmith "Dream On" samples. "Can't Let You Go," by Fabolous (featuring Lil' Mo), gets a clean, 96-BPM remix. This is the best remix on the set. The collection closes with a various-artist megamix (at a bathroom-break length of 18:22) from DJ 2nd Nature: "'02 Hip Hop Flashback Medley" (83-115 BPM). Nature is one of the top remixers in the biz and this medley really shows his excellent skills.

All the remixes mentioned above are available from The Source DJ. Call 800-775-3472 or surf/shop at www.thesourceformusic.com. Sound bites of all of the mentioned remixes are available at the site.•

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Desert Fox Sets Her Sights on Success

Toronto club DJ builds entertainment endeavors with military self-assurance

By Dan Walsh

For most of us, it seems that it takes a particularly intense experience or two to help us decide what's most important to us in life. This certainly applies to anyone who has decided to make entertainment a career. You have to know deep down inside that all the hard work, personal risk and frustration will be worth it. Interestingly, for Aida Gabriel, military service was one of those decisive influences, which equipped her with the personal strength to later realize her musical dreams.

Musical Training Regimen

As with many DJs, Aida Gabriel discovered at a young age that music was important to her. "I always loved music. It all started when I was four years old and my dad would bring tapes in from abroad...ABBA, Boney M., Rod Stewart, Bob Marley, Muddy Waters, etc. I remember that distinct feeling...to me music was not just a sound that my ears perceived, but also a visualized color of emotion. To me, music is an extension of life in the form of a sound."

Gabriel had been born in Russia, and her family took advantage of the deep musical traditions of that nation. "I was sent to music school in Moscow," she remembers. "I finished four years of violin, one of piano and was just starting to attend vocal classes when, at the age of nine my family immigrated to Italy, and then to Toronto, Canada."

Throughout high school Gabriel continued playing classical music but also caught the dance music bug, and even started dreaming of DJing. "I had a lot of friends and loved to party and go dancing. I started to buy records but was too shy and scared to play. A lot of my guy friends would spin, and they would be so good at it. I would watch in admiration."

Building Confidence

Also while in high school, an athletic Gabriel joined the Canadian military reserves. "That inadvertently helped me to deal with my shyness," she reports. "I started to develop my leadership and public speaking abilities." In college, she organized talent shows, and later worked at a community radio station while attending York University.

Before finishing her higher education, however, Gabriel answered the call to serve her country as part of a NATO peacekeeping unit in Yugoslavia. "Members of the U.S. Marines Signal Corp were stationed with us and they would run a radio station. Needless to say, I spent most of my spare time in that tower making music tapes and learning about live-to-air broadcasting."

"To me, music is an extension of life in the form of a sound."

Aida Gabriel

Gabriel had set her course for music and so drew up an appropriate plan of attack. Rather than returning to the university, she attended the Trebas Institute of Recording Arts, graduating with a diploma in Music Production. She also spent some time in the Mobile DJ trenches, under the wing of Mike Heindl at Spectrum of Sound in Toronto.

"A bit of a late bloomer, but 'DJ Desert Fox' was born," says Gabriel. "I had my hand in everything from weddings and karaoke to Christmas and kids parties...however my heart belongs to the clubs."

Mixing Specialist

Now in business for herself as sole proprietor of Much Success Enterprises, and involved with a variety of entertainment-related ventures, Aida Gabriel still focuses on the essential importance of the music.

"I just concentrate on blending one beat into the next, while maintaining the pulse of the dance floor," she explains. "Each time I play is totally different from the next. However, if I get complimented at the end of the night, then I know I did my job." To accomplish the task of seamless mixing, Gabriel prefers a Denon or Gemini dual CD player partnered with a TASCAM mixer.

Knowing the audience is another essential skill that Gabriel has mastered. "At the clubs I can spin one genre of music the whole night, but at other functions you have to play in sets. At the end of the day, you have to be able to read the crowd."

Marching Forward, Musically

Gabriel's bookings to date have been based solely on word-of-mouth publicity. She mixes a few mobile events per month in with a steady Friday/Saturday club schedule and a range of other club dates. She is working on adding to her playing schedule, while also developing some other inventive ideas.

"I would like to help in promoting live DJs playing at restaurants, a concept that is not that trendy in Toronto." Other projects include sponsorship development for an urban music TV pilot and a Canadian race car, as well as production of her own house/dance tracks. "I am presently back at university working on finishing my BBA, specializing in marketing. I am planning and working on many expanding aspects of my company, not only in the musical spheres but also in media marketing."

This ambitious DJ has also gotten back in touch with her roots and found yet another source of musical inspiration. She reports: "I had not been in Moscow for 13 years. I just recently returned from there and the party scene was off the hook! The sounds coming out of Europe are incredible. I was spinning at Club Circus. I intend to go back in November for an extended two-week playing tour."

Summing up her busy musical existence, Aida Gabriel says, "So many things to do, so little time!" •

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Entertaining Transformation

Suburban mom morphs into dance floor executive

By Dan Walsh

Antonieta Zappier's story is similar to those of many women. After successfully raising children and excelling at managing a household, the time comes to try something new, or maybe to get back in touch with a previous passion. For one woman, it's opening her own boutique. For another, it's transforming the kid's room into an art studio and getting busy sculpting, painting or whatever. For another, it's honing her writing skills and publishing the Great American Novel. In Zappier's case, it was getting out on the floor and creating a high-quality entertainment experience for the people of the Greater New York area.

Choosing a New Direction

"This comes very naturally to me," Zappier says, when asked about her Mobile DJ background. "I am extremely social and always entertaining in my personal life. But I have to say, it's definitely my passion for music that's brought me to where I am today."

"In the early 1990s I decided that it was time to get back into the workforce. Both of my children were in school full-time, and I really wanted to find something that would be interesting and stimulating. I knew that office work wouldn't be the answer—so I decided to try something I felt passionate about—you know what they say, 'Do what you love and the money will follow.'" With the support of friends and family who knew Zappier definitely had the gift of entertainment, she embarked on her new career as A. Sharp DJ.

Sharpening Her Skills

Rather than stepping onto a corporate ladder or entering the typical rat race, Zappier began adding to her DJ bag of tricks. She took a methodical approach, starting with a firm foundation, and building upon it a solid set of entertainment skills.

"The professionalism came in time. I started with the easy gigs: children's birthday parties, friend's parties, a Halloween party here or there. Then I worked larger functions with other DJs. It wasn't long before I knew I could do it on my own—I would be a guest at a party and I'd be thinking, 'Why is that DJ playing that song?' or 'That's not the best mix.' I knew I could do a better job. Once I had the confidence, I moved to a few small weddings and sweet sixteens, and before I knew it, I was doing bar/bat mitzvahs for 400 people."

After starting close to home, in Westchester County, New York, she has since expanded her coverage area to New York City, Long Island, Connecticut and New Jersey. These days, she still leans heavily toward mitzvahs and parties for children and teens, and she's proven herself good enough at them to get top dollar for her area. "Children's parties are my love," she admits, "but I DJ every type of party there is."

Points of Contact

Zappier echoes the sentiments of many mature female DJs (see our feature story on page 34) when she mentions a particular advantage she feels she has in the competitive world of mobile entertainment. "I know exactly what a parent is feeling when planning the perfect bar mitzvah or a bride when she's planning her perfect day. As someone who has experienced these pressures firsthand, I can focus on the details and empathize with the stress. I think the people who plan the parties appreciate the woman's touch."

Beyond the gender issue, Zappier has an interesting perspective on how her current stage of life affects her DJing. "I think my age (42) is a wonderful asset for my business. I have a daughter in middle school and a son in high school, so I really have my finger on the pulse of the younger generation's music. I'm well versed in rock, pop and yes, disco, because I sang in a band during the '70s and '80s. I also have a real love for the music of my parent's generation. Being in the middle has helped me to appreciate music from every age group."

"I would be a guest at a party and I'd be thinking, 'Why is that DJ playing that song?' or 'That's not the best mix.' I knew I could do a better job." – Antonieta Zappier

Overcoming Adversity

Although she's a single operator, Zappier maintains a number of different systems for different types of events. Her typical core setup includes a Denon DN-2600F dual CD player, a Denon DN-X400 mixer, a Crown K2 amp and EAW FR-153Z speakers.

Speaking of equipment, Zappier has overcome one traumatic experience that might have taken down a less determined DJ. "In May 2000, my minivan, DJ equipment, all my CDs, lights, etc. were stolen right out of my driveway in the middle of the night...It was the most devastating day of my life." But she didn't give up; she figured out what she needed to do to carry on—and did it. "I had everything sent overnight and I was able to get through a weekend of back to back parties. I still don't know how I did it!"

Personal Touch

For many it may seem hard to believe, but Zappier's business is thriving on the strength of word-of-mouth advertising alone. But then again, a good reputation combined with proficient networking skills can take you pretty far, especially with the huge potential client base of the metropolitan New York area.

She wants to keep her focus on that individualized, hands-on approach. "I'd like to say that my goals for the future of the company revolve around growth," says Zappier, "but in actuality they don't. Since I like to manage all the jobs I book myself—so the service is completely personalized—I can only grow to the capacity that I can fill. Sure, I have dancers and light people, but all of the music planning and arranging for every event is done strictly by me."

Ann Zappier has certainly become A. Sharp DJ—by building on her strengths and staying in touch with what she knows is most important. •

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ADVENTURES in Birthday MUSIC

By Jay Maxwell

First graders challenge the professor's playlist proficiency

Al Parish is a business professor at the same university where I teach mathematics. He was my best man over twelve years ago. He helped me get my teaching position. His oldest son, William, is exactly nine months older than my oldest daughter. His daughter and my son are only one year apart. Needless to say, Al and I are the best of friends. He is also an investor, with a strong interest in the futures market. So, six months ago when he said that William wanted me to DJ his birthday party, I thought he meant in the future—say, about five years down the road. Instead, I learned that he meant William's next birthday (seven, not twelve).

Selecting Songs for Tender Ears

Several times a month, my company plays parties for middle schools, twelve- and thirteen-year-olds' birthday parties, and bar/bat mitzvahs. But, in over twenty years as a Mobile DJ, I had never played at a first grader's birthday party. I have a six-year-old daughter and knew that she had outgrown the music from *Barney* and *Sesame Street*. But she also isn't into modern Top 40 music. Due to the lyrical content of much of today's music, my wife and I will probably not let her listen to the radio until she's 21. Knowing that William most likely wasn't allowed to touch the radio knob either, I called Al to ask him about William's favorite songs. The boy must have a secret longing for a pet, because the two songs he specifically requested were "Who Let the Dogs Out" and "Hound Dog." While teens want to hear only songs that are currently on the airwaves, William had just given me two songs with a 45-year difference in their release dates.

Based on just these two song suggestions, I planned the playlist. To make the list, a song had to be fun. The tempo had to be energetic, the lyrics had to be catchy (and, of course, squeaky clean), and it got bonus points if it was a song that the parents had listened to as kids. I was fairly certain that no true dancing would take place. Instead, I expected a lot of running around, kids and parents bouncing off the walls (figuratively, if not literally), and more energy in one playroom than a thousand battery-operated pink bunnies.

More than Musical Amusement

Although I took care in creating the playlist, I was concerned my music would end up as nothing more than an addition to the noise and not a major part of the entertainment. Keeping one seven-year-old's attention is hard; keeping twenty first graders entertained was going to be a real challenge.

To ensure that I added to the excitement, I planned on playing a lot of games with the kids. I would play a game then play a song or two. This would continue for the entire evening. I thought simple classics like Hot Potato, Musical Chairs, Limbo, and Freeze would work fine. I went to the "dollar store" and, for just over twenty dollars, bought a bag of prizes. Just for an extra thrill, I placed one prize inside a cardboard box and then duct taped it several times. The kids would pass the box around until the music stopped and then try to open it in five seconds. Then the music would start again and they'd again pass the box. The first one to open the box would get to keep the prize.

	SONG TITLE	ARTIST
1	WHO LET THE DOGS OUT	BAHA MEN
2	LIMBO ROCK	CHUBBY CHECKER
3	HOKEY POKEY	RAY ANTHONY
4	CHICKEN DANCE	VARIOUS
5	LET'S TWIST AGAIN	CHUBBY CHECKER
6	THE TWIST	CHUBBY CHECKER
7	SHOUT	OTIS DAY
8	Y.M.C.A.	VILLAGE PEOPLE
9	I'M A BELIEVER	SMASH MOUTH
10	TWIST AND SHOUT	BEATLES
11	ROCK-IN ROBIN	BOBBY DAY
12	BIRTHDAY	BEATLES
13	ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK	BILL HALEY AND HIS COMETS
14	ABC	JACKSON 5
15	HOUND DOG	ELVIS PRESLEY
16	LA BAMBA	RITCHIE VALENS
17	CELEBRATION	KOOL & THE GANG
18	THE LOCO-MOTION	KYLIE MINOGUE
19	MICKEY	TONI BASIL
20	HAKUNA MATATA	LION KING SOUNDTRACK
21	THE LION SLEEPS TONIGHT	TOKENS
22	MOVE IT LIKE THIS	BAHA MEN
23	FUN, FUN, FUN	BEACH BOYS
24	JOY TO THE WORLD	THREE DOG NIGHT
25	FOOTLOOSE	KENNY LOGGINS
26	CROCODILE ROCK	ELTON JOHN
27	SPLISH SPLASH	BOBBY DARIN
28	JAILHOUSE ROCK	ELVIS PRESLEY
29	HOT HOT HOT	BUSTER POINDEXTER
30	WOOLY BULLY	SAM THE SHAM AND THE PHARAOHS
31	WIPE OUT	SURFARIS
32	ROCK THIS TOWN	STRAY CATS
33	GIRLS JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN	CYNDI LAUPER
34	SUGAR, SUGAR	ARCHIES
35	WALK LIKE AN EGYPTIAN	BANGLES
36	WALKING ON SUNSHINE	KATRINA AND THE WAVES
37	OB-LA-DI, OB-LA-DA	BEATLES
38	COOL JERK	CAPITOLS
39	WILD THING	TROGGS
40	HANG ON SLOOPY	MCCOYS
41	SHAKE A TAIL FEATHER	JAMES & BOBBY PURIFY
42	YAKETY YAK	COASTERS
43	DO WAH DIDDY DIDDY	MANFRED MANN
44	CHARLIE BROWN	COASTERS
45	LOLLIPOP	CHORDETTES
46	WILLIE AND THE HAND JIVE	JOHNNY OTIS SHOW
47	BARBARA ANN	BEACH BOYS
48	NAME GAME	SHIRLEY ELLIS
49	WE GOT THE BEAT	GO-GO'S
50	JIVE TALKING	BEE GEES

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Keeping one seven-year-old's attention is hard; keeping twenty first graders entertained was going to be a real challenge.

Back to School

As I was setting up in my friend's playroom for the birthday party, my adrenaline was pumping. In many ways it felt like I was about to do my first gig. But I was ready to rock and rumble with the wild bunch.

As the diminutive guests arrived, I played background music and kept a low profile. Once everyone was there, they all went into the kitchen to eat pizza. Ten minutes later they all stormed back into the large playroom and the show was ready to begin. That's when the only glitch almost happened.

Twenty kids bounced into the room with no parents in tow. Before I had time to panic, thinking that I was about to become a solo babysitter, a couple of parents soon followed the young partiers. (Whew!) I picked a couple of adult assistants and the fun began. From then on, I only went behind the console to change the music; otherwise, I was in the midst of the joyous mob—having a great time, too.

Making Childhood Memories

The only thing that I will do different next time is to bring my own assistant so I don't have to go behind the console during the entire event. Also, I would use a lot more duct tape on the prize box. After only three rounds of music, the kids stopped pulling the tape off and sat on the box to break into it! Never underestimate the resourcefulness of a seven-year-old.

The best part of all was that Al and his wife Yolanda were extremely happy. Never did they expect such an eventful birthday party. There is no way that I could ever repay Al for all he has done for me over the years, so it was a great pleasure to give his son such a memorable party. By the way, Yolanda gave birth to twin girls one month before William's birthday party. When I asked my wife if we were going to continue to follow our friends' lead, her reply was, "Don't even think about it!" •

For more information or availability on any of the CDs in Music News, call AVC Sebastian at 973-731-5290 or visit www.HitMusicb2b.com

Nineties!

Never Enough Never Enough Never Enough

By Fred Sebastian

On the ever-changing landscape of music, it's nice to see that some things stay the same. Every decade produces great favorites that we can keep in our CD collections, re-living the effect they had on us when we first got hooked on them. Playing past hits that you haven't heard for awhile can be just what's needed to stir up some good-time feelings.

For DJs, the real challenge is learning the most music that will move the most people, most often. Then, of course, you need more music to complement that core of preferred tracks. The compilations I'll tell you about this month focus mainly on pop and dance hits of the nineties, featuring many top memory-makers of the day. They are mainly best-of-year compilations containing hits that played through the end of the millennium and beyond. Whether you're a sophomore mixer or going for your masters degree in musicology, here are some music lessons to be learned and reviewed regularly.

CDs in the *Now* series have long been among the top-selling hit compilations in the UK. This has led, in turn, to the successful US series, *Now That's What I Call Music*. The hits featured on these discs are usually the same in both countries, however, the British releases have always been double-CD compilations compared to single CDs in the US. ***NOW DANCE - BEST OF '94*** is an outstanding two-CD collection of club favorites, including some hard-to-find gems.

Another Night (Radio Mix).... THE REAL McCOY
Rhythm Of The Night (Rapino Brothers Radio Version) .....CORONA
Baby Come Back .....
.. PATO BANTON w/ ROBIN & ALI CAMPBELL
I Like To Move It .....
..... REEL 2 REAL w/ THE MAD STUNTMAN
Incredible (Radio Edit-New Mix) .....
..... M-BEAT w/ GENERAL LEVY
She's Got That Vibe..... R. KELLY
Carry Me Home..... GLOWORM
Just A Step From Heaven (Remix) ..... ETERNAL
Things Can Only Get Better (D:Reamix Edit) .....
..... D:REAM
Renaissance (Radio Mix)..... M PEOPLE
Light My Fire (Cappella RAZ Zone Remix Edit) ...
..... CLUB HOUSE w/ CARL
Anything .....CULTURE BEAT
Get-A-Way (Airplay Mix)..... MAXX
The Real Thing .....2 UNLIMITED
Swamp Thing (Radio Mix).....THE GRID
ABC And D (Groove On The Mista Rhythm Remix) ..... BLUE BAMBOO
Waterfall ..... ATLANTIC OCEAN
Move On Baby (Definitive Edit)..... CAPPELLA
Sweets For My Sweet..... C.J. LEWIS
Don't Turn Around (7" Aswad Mix) .....
..... ACE OF BASE
Shine..... ASWAD
Compliments On Your Kiss .....
..... RED DRAGON w/ BRIAN & TONY GOLD
Can You Feel It? (Erick "More" Radio Edit) .....
..... REEL 2 REAL w/ THE MAD STUNTMAN
No Good (Start The Dance) .....THE PRODIGY
Dreamer (Radio Mix) .....LIVIN'JOY
Cantgetaman, Cantgetajob (Life's A Bitch).....
.....SISTER BLISS w/ COLETTE
Let The Music Lift You Up (Full On Vocal Radio Edit).....LOVELAND w/ RACHEL McFARLANE
I Get Lifted (Loveland's High On Life Radio Edit)
..... BARBARA TUCKER
Caught In The Middle (My Heart Beats Like A Drum) (Remix)..... JULIET ROBERTS
No More Tears (Enough Is Enough).....
.....KYM MAZELLE & JOCELYN BROWN
Let The Beat Control Your Body (Airplay Edit) ....
.....2 UNLIMITED
Doop ..... DOOP
Rock My Heart ..... HADDAWAY
No More (I Can't Stand It) ..... MAXX
Best Of My Love.....C.J. LEWIS
Dedicated To The One I Love.....BITTY McLEAN
Searching (Mykaell S Riley Mix)...CHINA BLACK
Sweet Lullaby ..... DEEP FOREST
Come Baby Come (Radio Edit) K7
Shoop ..... SALT-N-PEPA

In music, like fine wine, some years are better than others. The compilation entitled ***DANCE TIP 1995*** proved to have far more substance than advertised, providing not only dance tips but dance hits. Like other major label compilations it features many of the biggest acts that were filling dance floors on a global scale.

Fairground (Single).....SIMPLY RED
Gangsta's Paradise..... COOLIO w/ LV
Boom Boom Boom (UK Radio Edit).....
.....OUTHERE BROTHERS
Stayin' Alive.....N-TRANCE
Scatman John ..... SCATMAN
Try Me Out (Lee Marrow Airplay Mix)..CORONA
Missing (Todd Terry Club Mix) .....
.....EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL
Hideaway (Deep Dish Radio Mix)..... DE' LACY
Runaway (Airplay Mix 1)..... REAL McCOY
I've Got A Little Something MN8
U Sure Do .....STRIKE
Two Can Play That Game (K Klassic Radio Mix)
..... BOBBY BROWN
Right In The Night.....JAM & SPOON
Don't You Want Me (Patrick Prins Remix/Edit)...
.....FELIX
Move Your Body (7" Radio Mix) .....
..... XPANSIONS '95
Happy Just To Be With You (Nigel Lowis Mix) ...
.....MICHELLE GAYLE
Shoot Me With Your Love (Loveland's 7" Pop'd Up Mix) ..... D:REAM
Sight For Sore Eyes (Radio Mix)..... M PEOPLE
Surrender Your Love (MK Radio).....
..... NIGHTCRAWLERS
Not Over Yet (Perfecto Edit) .....GRACE
You Remind Me Of Something..... R. KELLY
Dreamer (7" Mix)..... LIVIN' JOY
Turn On, Tune In, Cop Out .....FREAK POWER
I Luv U Baby..... THE ORIGINAL
Walking In Memphis (Shut Up & Dance Vocal Mix) ..... CHER
Son Of A Gun.....JX
The Bomb .....THE BUCKETHEADS
Don't Stop (Wiggle Wiggle) (Townhouse Radio Edit).....OUTHERE BROTHERS
3 Is Family (T-Empo Club Mix).DANA DAWSON
Whoomph! There It Is (Short Stab).....CLOCK
Set You Free.....N-TRANCE
Tell Me When (7" Edit)..... HUMAN LEAGUE
Baby Baby (Lee Marrow Radio Mix)...CORONA
Here Comes The Hotstepper..... INI KAMOZE
Total Eclipse Of The Heart .....NICKI FRENCH
Your Loving Arms (Original Radio).....
..... BILLY RAY MARTIN
Reach Up (Papa's Got A Brand New Pigbag) (Radio Edit)..... PERFECTO ALLSTARZ
Always Something There To Remind Me.....
.....TIN TIN OUT
The First, The Last, Eternity ..... SNAP
Zombie (Eternal Airplay Mix).. A.D.A.M. w/ AMY

Guaglione.....PEREZ PRADO
Cotton Eye Joe.....REDNEX

In the double-CD compilation ***BIG MIX '96***, the energy is flowing. Though it's a mixed CD that you can play nonstop, it is also cleanly indexed so you can track easily to each song. Clubbers on more than one continent have given this collection high marks.

Stamp .....JEREMY HEALY & AMOS
Are You Ready For Some More.... REEL 2 REAL
Sevendays & One Week ..... BBE
Follow The Rules ..... LIVIN' JOY
Fable.....ROBERT MILES
If I Could Fly..... GRACE
The Gift .....WAY OUT WEST
Arms Of Loren.....EVOKE
Why ..... RICARDO DA FORCE
Professional Widow ..... TORI AMOS
If Madonna Calls ..... JUNIOR VASQUEZ
Want Love.....HYSTERIC EGO
Up To No Good.....PORNKINGS
Do That To Me..... LISA MARIE EXPERIENCE
That Look.....DE'LACY
Keep On Jumpin ... TODD TERRY W/ MARTHA WASH & JOCELYN BROWN .....
Come Dig It ..... MACHEL
In De Ghetto.....DAVID MORALES & THE BAD YARD CLUB w/ CRYSTAL WATERS.....
Higher State Of Consciousness..... WINK
Freedom..... ROBBIE WILLIAMS
Alcohol.....SUGGS
December '63 (Oh What A Night) ..... CLOCK
Crazy.....MARK MORRISON
Hello Honky Tonks .....PIZZAMAN
Macarena.....LOS DEL RIO
Take Me Higher ..... DIANA ROSS
Move Your Body..... RUFFNECK W/ YAVAHN
Killing Me Softly ..... DRAGSTER & TOMBA
Everybody's Free .....ROZALLA
Where Love Lives .....ALISON LIMERICK
Power Of '96 .....SNAP
Born Slippy.....UNDERWORLD
Wrong ..... EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL
Twist In My Sobriety.....TANITA TIKARAM
Elevator Song..... DUBSTAR
Me And You Versus The World ..... SPACE
Take Me Away ..... CULTURE BEAT
We've Got It Goin' On ..... BACKSTREET BOYS

Quite commonly on Top 200 radio, the distinction between pop and dance is blurred. The following CD reflects this, as a radio hit compilation that exhibits much of the variety you'll find on mainstream radio. Called **PURE HITS 1997**, it's mainly comprised of Top 40 titles featuring dance, pop, alternative, and more.

Don't Speak .....NO DOUBT
All About Us ..... PETER ANDRE
Freed From Desire..... GALA
Ecuador.....SASH! w/ RODRIGUEZ
I Believe I Can Fly ..... R KELLY
Don't Leave Me .....BLACKSTREET
Love Lady..... DAMAGE
If You Ever .....EAST 17 w/ GABRIELLE
The Magic Piper (Of Love)....EDWYN COLLINS
Hundred Mile High City .....
.....OCEAN COLOUR SCENE
Your Woman.....WHITE TOWN
Underwater Love ..... SMOKE CITY
My Father's Son.....CONNER REEVES
Waltz Away Dreaming.....
.....TOBY BOURKE w/ GEORGE MICHAEL
Shout .....ANT & DEC
California Dreamin' . MAMAS AND THE PAPAS
Time To Say Goodbye (Con Te Partiro) .....
.....SARAH BRIGHTMAN
Beetlebum.....BLUR
Susan's House ..... EELS
Richard III .....SUPERGRASS
Love Is The Law ..... THE SEAHORSES
Free Me.....CAST
How High .....THE CHARLATANS
Nancy Boy.....PLACEBO
Swallowed..... BUSH
Freeze The Atlantic .....CABLE
Satan.....ORBITAL
Flylife ..... BASEMENT JAXX
Get Up (Everybody) .....BYRON STINGILY
Lovefool (Tee's Club Radio).. THE CARDIGANS
Remember Me ..... THE BLUEBOY
U Sexy Thing .....CLOCK
Clouds.....THE SOURCE
Flash .....BBE
I Can Make You Feel Good ..... KAVANA

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Bodyshakin' 911
Hey DJ! (Play That Song) ..... N-TYCE
Everybody (Backstreet's Back).....
.....BACKSTREET BOYS
Belissima.....DJ QUICKSILVER
Closer Than Close .....ROSIE GAINES

Nearing the end of the millennium, the plans were being laid for closing out the previous hundred years with phenomenal parties. In the double-CD compilation ***BEST OF DANCE 1998***, the way was being paved with some huge hits and crowd-pleasers. From clubs to wedding receptions and office parties, these hits made the rounds.

It's Like That .... RUN DMC vs. JASON NEVINS
Horny (Horny '98 Radio Edit) .....
.....MOUSSE T. vs. HOT 'N' JUICY
Feel It (Blunt Edit)...THE TAMPERER w/ MAYA
Brimful Of Asha (Norman Cook Remix Single Version) .....CORNERSHOP
Gangster Trippin' .....FATBOY SLIM
Renegade Master (Fatboy Slim Old Skool Edit) .....WILDCHILD
Beat Goes On .....THE ALL SEEING I
New Kind Of Medicine..... ULTRA NATE
You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real) .....
.....BYRON STINGILY
Sounds Of Wickedness..... TZANT
Kung Fu Fighting .....
.....BUS STOP w/ CARL DOUGLAS
Stranded .....LUTRICIA McNEAL
Sex On The Beach ..... T SPOON
One For Sorrow.....STEPS
Kiss The Rain (Tp2k Radio Remix) .....
.....BILLIE MYERS
Crush (Dance Mix) .....JENNIFER PAIGE
Turn Back Time (Love To Infinity's Classic Radio Mix) ..... AQUA
Real Good Time (Stonebridge's Club Reykjavik Vocal Mix).....ALDA
Burning (Blockster Edit) ..... BABY BUMPS
Move Mania.....SASH! w/ SHANNON
Each Time (Sunship Remix Edit) E17
Car Wash '98 (Mustard Edit).....
ROSE ROYCE w/GWEN DICKEY & MONDAY
..... NIGHT CLUB
Bamboogie.....BAMBOO
Mysterious Times ....SASH! w/ TINA COUSINS
The Rockafeller Skank.....FATBOY SLIM
Let Me Show You ..... CAMISRA
Got To Get Up .....
.....AFRIKA BAMBAATAA vs. CARPE DIEM
Keep On Dancin' (Let's Go) .....
..... PERPETUAL MOTION
Treat Infamy.....REST ASSURED
Meet Her At The Love Parade..... DA HOOL
Deeper Love (Ruff Mix Radio Edit).....
.....RUFF DRIVERZ
Cafe Del Mar '98 (Original 3 'N' 1 Radio Edit)...
.....ENERGY 52
Been A Long Time (Full Intention Radio Edit)....
.....THE FOG
All My Love..... QUEEN PEN
Telefunkin' ..... N-TYCE
Teardrops (Flava Mix 7").....LOVESTATION
Deep Menace (Spank) (Joey Negro's Sitone Radio Edit) .....D'MENACE
Real Good .....DOUBLE SIX
Le Disc Jockey..... ENCORE
El Nino..... AGNELLI & NELSON
You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet .....
..... BUS STOP w/ RANDY BACHMAN
House Music (Full Intention Radio Edit) .....
.....EDDIE AMADOR
You Better (Betta Hear Dis Mix).....
..... MOUNT RUSHMORE
Dreaming (Ruff Driverz Ruff Radio Edit) .....
.....ARROLA

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ABBA for Different Dance Floors

It was a particularly dreary day when I popped a disc called ABBA DANCE into my CD player. As the first track began playing, I had to laugh at myself. Although I've never been an ABBA fan, the borderline trance-style dance version of "Dancing Queen" immediately lifted me out of the blue funk of my rainy day and put a smile on my face.

After that first ray of sunshine, the CD, created by Euphorica, a collective of cutting-edge dance remixers and producers, continues through a playlist of mega hits by the Swedish pop sensation of the seventies. The tracks feature smoothly solid but not pounding beats, all within the 110-125 BPM range. On top are layered rich keyboards and clear female vocals that are suitable for the songs, but not too imitative of the originals. Some interesting vocal effects and ethereal samples help reinforce the trancy feel of the dance tracks. Some of the tracks bear little resemblance to the originals, using the melodies and little else to take off in a totally new, hypnotic dance direction.

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Dancing Queen
S.O.S.
Take A Chance On Me
Mamma Mia
Lay All Your Love On Me
Knowing Me, Knowing You
Voulez Vous
Super Trooper
The Name Of The Game
The Winner Takes It All

Bowlers and Golfers Do It—

Shouldn't We?

By Greg Tutwiler

I have to admit, I'm not a huge fan of the reality TV hit, *American Idol*. But my curiosity got the best of me recently when I saw the listing for the "Best of the Worst" show. What a riot. I laughed for the first thirty minutes of the show. Then it dawned on me: these people were serious. They really thought they had a chance. And then I realized that I know most of them. Not personally, mind you, but I see people who fit the profiles of each of the *American Idol* singers at my shows regularly. It slowly began to lose its humor.

Professional Singers' Association?

Now, having said that, what I began to remember was just how serious karaoke singers take their hobby. It's no different than bowling or golf. (Of course the bowlers and golfers would disagree.) These folks are at it two, three, four times a week. They're working towards an ultimate goal. Bowlers have the PBA and golfers have the PGA or LPGA. These associations at the professional level offer some pretty significant paydays for the top competitors. Likewise, American Idol, Star Search, or the Talent Quest Singing Championships are examples of the competitive crescendo for karaoke singers. ("Track singing" is the politically correct term these days.)

It's in the Way that You Run It

Okay, so not everyone makes it that far. But there are thousands of singing contests annually in bars, pubs, restaurants, shopping malls, county fairs, and bowling alleys across North America. And the popularity of *American Idol* and *Star Search* has only helped increase the desire to compete and win. However, a poorly run contest can cost you a bundle, in money and reputation. Remember, almost everyone who signs up to compete thinks they have a legitimate shot at taking first place. You, as the KJ, have a responsibility to provide an environment that is competitive, exciting, and most of all, fair.

Here are some ideas that will help you produce a competition that you'll be proud of, and one that will leave even the losers lining up for the next one.

Keep It Short

Six to eight weeks is more than long enough to run a contest. If you drag it out too long, everyone loses interest. Qualify two winners each week and on the seventh or eighth week, conduct a championship with all of the weekly winners to produce a single champion.

Offer Quality Prizes

An opportunity to advance further in a national contest is good but it's not enough by itself. And a title is nice too, but it's still not enough. People like to win "something." Cash speaks volumes to contestants.

People like travel packages too, as long as they are legit. Work with a travel agency on this. They may be willing to barter for advertising. Bogus travel vouchers will come back to haunt you.

It is also helpful to give more than one prize. Establish categories like male, female and duet. And offer a first, second and third place in each. Obviously, everyone wants to win first place, but receiving second or third is better than losing. And having more prizes available will help you attract a larger group of participants.

Be Fair!

This is paramount. If the singers even suspect that you, the KJ, are participating in the selection process, it will cast doubt on the validity of the outcome. Remember, you have the most to gain or lose here. You have to think long term. At $200 a week, this gig is worth over $10,000 a year to you. The last thing you want is for the crowd to turn on you and instigate a fast exit for you from the lounge. Running a fair contest will also open up more doors for you down the road, as your regulars learn that they can trust you, and club owners see how loyal your audience is.

Planning for Success

Prep work prior to the contest will alleviate a lot of last minute headaches. Here are some points to consider:

• Give yourself, and the club, plenty of time to get the word out to the karaoke community. Start your PR four to six weeks ahead of the event. Let the excitement build. If you can create anticipation, it will translate into dollars.

• Contact your local newspapers and radio stations about the competition. Send press releases to as many places that you can think of. You might even get some free advertising out of it.

• Line up your prizes early so you can use them in your marketing. Get some local businesses to sponsor the event. A lot of companies will "donate" prizes in exchange for the publicity. If you're hosting the contest in a hotel lounge, ask if they can trade out some rooms with another property. You can use these to create travel packages.

• If you're planning to link up to a national contest, know when their deadlines are so you can finish your contest on time for your winner or winners to continue on.

The popularity of *American Idol* and *Star Search* has helped increase the desire in the singing community to compete and win.

• Print fair, legible score cards for the judges and allow contestants to see one. Make them aware of the criteria that they will be judged on. Many serious singers will want to practice with them in mind. It's important that they know what the judges are looking for.

• Have someone not present at the actual competition tally the scorecards in a location away from the main room, to prevent any possible cheating. You should also assign a number to each singer for scoring purposes. The scorer will not know which numbers go with which singer, thus eliminating any bias.

Judge Not

The issue of judging is also an extremely important and touchy aspect of any contest. Judges hold the fate of the singers in their hands. You, as the host of the event, should never act as a judge—ever. Bring in outside judges. Here again, the perception of fairness, as well as your reputation, are both at stake. You do your job and let the judges do theirs. If you act as a judge, you violate your relationship with your singers. You may be the fairest person in town, but someone will question you, no matter what. There are way too many feelings and egos in the balance.

Professional musicians make great judges, for two reasons. First, known personalities create extra interest in your contest, beyond the regular karaoke community. But secondly, and most importantly, you'll prevent accusations of favoritism by not selecting someone from your singers' peer group.

Ultimately, contests are a very useful asset to the KJ, if done properly. And they are now becoming more and more popular. Spend some time planning ahead before you dive in, and take the time to understand how to run an effective contest. It will make all the difference in the outcome of your event.•

Greg Tutwiler is the managing editor of Singer Magazine.

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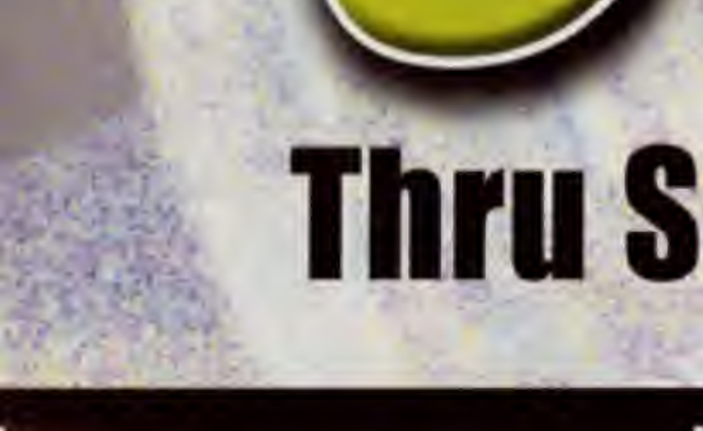

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Freedom to *Celebrate!*

Georgia DJ helps Iraqis celebrate their homeland's liberation

By Dan "Dano" Blankowski

Fourth of July celebrations will never be the same for me. Now I view freedom in a new light, thanks to a group of Iraqi natives living in the Atlanta area.

It was my pleasure to handle the musical entertainment and MC duties for the first-ever "Iraqi Freedom" party on April 12, 2003, immediately after American and Coalition troops liberated the city of Baghdad. Iraqi natives gathered with American friends and families to throw a party that celebrated the troops, the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime, and the liberation of an oppressed country. But the party wasn't about war and conflict—it was about freedom and friendship between Americans and Iraqis.

Serious Reasons for Rejoicing

Iraqi native and former political prisoner Esmail "Mike" Almaleki and his wife, Maureen, organized the party only 48 hours in advance. It was Mike and Maureen's way of thanking their American friends, neighbors and family for their support during their years living in America.

"Because of the conflict, and the evil of Saddam Hussein, Iraqi people in the U.S. were forced to keep a low profile and use American names. But now I'm proud to be known as 'Esmail' again," he said, explaining why he has not used that name since arriving in the U.S. in 1993. His customers at "Mike's Auto Repair" in Georgia probably didn't know their mechanic was a high-ranking opposition political party leader in Iraq, spending over three years in concentration camps for his opinions. They didn't realize the torture he endured, or the ramifications of having a $50,000 "price tag" on his head after he managed to escape.

But his customers certainly understood his smile, his joy and his new freedom from stereotypes and prejudice in the United States. "Iraqi people have no hatred of American people—we could never express our opinions without being jailed, beaten, tortured or killed. American people have freedom, and now Iraqi people have freedom, so that's why we celebrate tonight," Esmail told the crowd.

More beautiful words have never been spoken into my wireless microphone.

A Brand New Day

It was fate that introduced me to Esmail and Maureen. I originally had a different party scheduled for April 12, but it had been postponed. The day after I received that news, I called several of my favorite venues to tell them I had become available on that date. One hour later, I got the call for this special, last-minute event.

My ongoing relationship with the local conference center

Celebrate!

The party wasn't about war and conflict—it was about freedom and friendship between Americans and Iraqis.

resulted in an unprecedented joining of a Polish Catholic "celebrationist" with a joyous Middle Eastern Muslim activist—and the resulting party was truly a celebration of freedom.

With a group made up of Iraqis and Americans, programming the music was a challenge. Esmail's friends supplied me with some Iraqi party music, which I mixed with some American standards.

On the playlist were "We Are Family," "Got to Give It Up" by Marvin Gaye, "Dancing in the Street," "Changes" by David Bowie, Del Shannon's "Runaway," "Think" by Aretha Franklin, and Sting's "Brand New Day." The dance floor stayed full! (No, I didn't play "You Dropped a Bomb on Me"—but I was tempted!)

My personal highlight of the evening was when I located a large American flag on a pole in an adjacent vacant ballroom, and placed it side-by-side (with duct tape, of course) with the Iraqi flag. It became the most popular photo spot of the party.

As I reflect on my common bond with Esmail Almaleki, I can't take for granted the fact that here we can celebrate any occasion without fear of reprisal, without repercussions (unless, of course, you play "Feelings"), and without government censorship.

"It's a P.W.O.P.—party without oppression," Maureen laughed.

I hope our Founding Fathers celebrated their freedom in 1776 with a big party. I wish I could travel back in time to help them celebrate, because now I know exactly how they felt, thanks to my new Iraqi friends.•

"Celebrationists" Dan and Conni Blankowski own Magical Music Machine Entertainment in Marietta, Georgia. They can be reached at 770-579-8995, or e-mail them at Dano@MagicalMusicMachine.com with your comments.

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